

LORE OF THE KINSFOLK

BOOK II

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A nine-volume anthology edited and compiled by
D.S. BLAIS

First Edition
MMXVII

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For my sons.

*Ac se maga geonga under his maéges scyld elne
geéode þá his ágen wæs glédum forgrunden.*

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Introduction

Lore of the Kinsfolk is a large anthology of literature that reflects the cultural soul and values of our “Germanic,” “Nordic,” and “Celtic” European ancestors. While these ethnic terms are broad and imprecise, they provide sufficient distinction for there exists within their spiritual nexus a markedly different *Weltanschauung* from those of other cultures.

But what is this world-view? What is the true nature of our forefathers, our folk? I take the position that the best way we can discover the answer is through direct experience of their works. Thanks to the availability of their primary sources, we may “hear” the voices of our ancestors once more in their songs, sagas, epics, and chronicles. In this way their histories return to life as their sentiments and wisdom are renewed and reawakened within our own lives.

Until the availability of this compilation, an anthology such as this was lacking. To understand why, let us look at the “Great Books” and “Western Canon.” Though sometimes pilloried as out-moded and archaic, these canonical selections are still taught in many universities and should be considered carefully with a mind to not only what is included, but also what is excluded. Specifically, what is the perspective of the scholar who chooses Adam Smith over Thomas Malory, *Paradise Lost* over the *Song of Roland*, and so on?

The perspective of such a scholar is not at all original, but instead extends tastes which have their origin in the 14th century with the Renaissance and its disparagement of what Petrarch called the “Dark Ages.” There are three chief roots to this mentality, which so displaced our indigenous one and now completely possesses the modern world: (1) the Black Plague which spread with trade and altered the appearance of the world from one of divine order to that of a grim lottery, (2) the “Little Ice Age” that collapsed the agriculture of the Medieval Warm Period, and (3) Levantine trading and lending practices spreading through Europe, especially as the *Reconquista* ended *al-Andalus*. Together these instilled abstracted, rationalistic materialism and erected an irreconcilable barrier between Nature and Self.

As I have argued in *Mysteries of the Obvious*, the penchant and skill of the Jewish people for cosmopolitan trade was formed in the survival strategies of the Near Eastern sociological and climatological milieu following desertification. This climate change was central to the fall of the previous agriculturally-rooted kingdoms of the Near East, as that fertile, orderly, and harmonious natural world was turned to chaos, plunging good and bad alike into the throes of misfortune.

During this time the hostility of natural forces outside of human control led many to a sense of alienation from life; a perception of divine order as either cruel, indifferent, or nonexistent; and a resulting cynical egoistical materialism. The resource scarcity encouraged competition and selfishness as short-term personal opportunism prevailed over long-term social good, practical strategies in a starving land filled with predatory raiders. When the Black Plague and climate change occurred in Europe, a similar shift in the perception of Nature followed, most especially in the cities where the links to Her spirit were already tenuous and it is indeed in the cities of northern Italy that we first see the resolve of the old European spirit crumble into ruin.

The Jewish merchants and moneylenders who entered Florence found their Gentile champions in the Medici family, who pro-

tested and encouraged the Jewish population and trade practices. The House of Medici, bankrolled by the Jewish moneylenders whose wealth greatly expanded in the Islamic “Golden Age,” became exceedingly rich and powerful. The Medici possessed the largest bank in Europe through the 15th century, sired three popes and many royals, and lent to avaricious royalty throughout Europe.

Jewish collaboration with Gentiles towards international corporatism or imperialism may be found earlier in Rome, among the Muslim Caliphates, onwards through Europe via the Renaissance and Enlightenment, and ongoing in this corrupt age of Modernity. The style of Jewish-Gentile partnership capitalizes on the respective strengths of Jewish financial acumen and legalism in conjunction with Gentile military and industrial power. Contrary to the rhetoric of simplistic anti-Semites, this situation is not due to manipulation or exploitation on the part of the Jews, but transparently achieves precisely what both collaborating parties want, namely power and wealth — of exaggerated importance in desperate times as with decaying Rome or plague-ridden Europe.

Though the oligarchs thereby advance, the congress of commercial enterprise is not without its casualties and detractors, and perhaps no values are truly more antithetical to it than those of our European ancestors. Our concepts of Honor and Love are entirely opposed to the peddler’s *ethos*; the basis of the former is Nature and the deep sense of belonging to Her, while that of the latter is a rationalistic abstraction of life and spirituality entirely away from our Earthly origin to an abstract conception of Universe and Self. These two world views are not simply different perspectives of the same truth, but two diametrically opposed directions of the soul to or away from the real, living natural world.

Chivalry cannot abide Capitalism, nor the contrary. To defeat the obstacle posed to trade, the merchant must disarm the knight; neuter the old concepts of masculinity and femininity; replace “person” with “consumer;” mock sacrifice, loyalty, and honor; and endlessly advertise the Self over the Folk, that is, the individual over their larger sense of belonging within Nature.

Thus it is was that Petrarch, the Tuscan father of Renaissance, was to first describe the previous era as the “Dark Age” (i.e. *saeculum obscurum*), elevating the Greeks and Romans of antiquity while debasing the European successors as ignorant primitives. The Renaissance is the reaction that he and other Northern Italians, informed by cynicism derived of pestilence and famine, initially fashioned in choosing the glittering ephemerality of wealthy and decadent past empires over the ancestral European outlook. While the ancestral outlook could be characterized as ultimately based on the intimate faith in Nature’s inherent goodness and correctness (i.e. the harmonious expression of the divine in the Middle World), the future mentality was utterly aloof from such pedestrianly mundane notions of God, Soul, and Nature.

The New Man of commerce, technology, and imperialism would spread the inticements of the Jews and their imitative collaborators into Belgium, Amsterdam, England, and throughout Europe, promoting his cosmopolitan oligarchical *ethos* everywhere he went. Fresh imperialism caught on fire, profitable colonies were established overseas, ruthless slavery came back into vogue, the cruel Jehovah replaced the compassionate Christ — and subsequently was entirely displaced with Spinoza, Hobbes, Diderot, *et al* — and thereafter all “enlightened” people only

looked with embarrassment and contempt upon those ridiculous old views of the past.

And, so it is that conventional scholars ever since may find Shakespeare's street-smart wit or Cervantes' satirical mocking palatable, but reject the Matter of Britain as unworthy of canonical inclusion. Mortimer J. Alder's famed *Great Books of the Western World* well demonstrates this myopia. After eighteen massive volumes of classical works, not a single piece is included from the eight hundred years spanning Augustine to Aquinas! The modern corruption of value is so great that hundreds of pages of pointless astronomical tables from Kepler and Copernicus are included, but not a paragraph of the Nordic Sagas. And, why but because science and technology are so exceptionally valued in our present society — not due to an innate love of Natural Philosophy or Natural History, but because of their singular utility to commercial advantage!

Some have cast this conflict as a theological one, positing that the Church stifled creativity and imagination prior to the Renaissance. This belief reveals a tremendous myth in the historical understanding of the Christian religion, one that the religion's defenders and detractors both like to perpetuate: that the Christian religion of the Middle Ages is the same slavish, biblical creed as that of today, ignoring the hidden truth of the Reformation. In actuality, the historical Christianity of our ancestors was far more a reflection and furtherance of their own inherent nature than the supposed alien imposition of a Jewish sect.

To understand this, let us consider some facts. Once Imperial Rome had sufficiently weakened due to their own decadence and overreaching dilution, our kinsmen, the Visigoths, sacked Rome and German law, as with the *Visigothic Code*, replaced Roman law over the Western stretches of the former Roman Empire. Unlike the Roman subjects of Constantine *et al*, Christianity was not imposed on the ruling tribes or their kinsmen, but voluntarily adopted over time by the Northern peoples.

Why did Christianity appeal to them? Christianity was, from the beginning, a highly accessible and universal theological system formed from a mosaic of other beliefs including Roman paganism, Mithraism, Stoicism, and Buddhism. Until the dogmatism of the philo-Semitic Puritans and their restoration of Old Testament legalism, Christianity in practice was largely a matter of adopting what most resonated with the believer as variously realized from sect to sect, people to people. Our ancestors could see the strong similarities in the astro-theological underpinnings of Christianity to their heathen systems which had thousands of years travelled with them in their migration from the winnowing agricultural lands of the Near East. Free to adapt Christianity as they wished, they accepted and encouraged what they found interesting, useful, and true, while simultaneously preserving their own beliefs and practices. This was very much like the Roman's espousal of Greek mythology, and they were free to fit the religion to the mold they wished so that it was additive to, rather than subtractive from their own extant philosophies.

This adaption occurred in just the same manner as when the Franks adopted and shaped the Latin language into what we now know as French. Valuing Latin's vocabulary, grammar, literature, and wide usage, the Franks, Burgundians, *et al* repurposed the Roman's language for their own expressive goals, preserving Germanic linguistic traits but, more importantly, the overall personality of their own folk. Thus, Christianity through the Middle Ages, while not a Germanic invention, was a Germanic (and Celtic) *adaptation* of a flexible, complex religion into their own existing spiritual frameworks, from the Yggdrasil tree of salvation to the Celtic Cross.

A tremendous example of this is given us by the *Heliand*, the Saxon gospel of the 9th century. After the tyrannical behavior of Charlemagne towards the Saxons, a different approach by the Frankish Christians was used to convert the remaining pagans. Radically dissimilar from the conventional gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Saxon gospel has a great many divergences from the traditional story of Jesus, portraying him and his Apostles as honorable and brave warriors. Jesus himself is shown as a heroic warrior chief imbued with pagan magical ability, his story a strong fusion of Germanic and early Christian *mythoi*.

As with Christianity, the ideas of our ancestors being generally brutish and cruel, predisposed to early deaths, and acutely scientifically ignorant are wholly in error. Fortunately, this older view of medievalism, so widely propagated by the Renaissance and its followers, has been undergoing a significant revisionism at the hands of some academics. This began with the Romantics, themselves a reaction to the inhumanity of modernity and industrialism, many of whom embraced the spirit of the past and sought to continue its traditions into their own time.

In fact, the true nature of our ancestral character is shown by its honorableness, compassion, piety, idealism, humaneness, and vigor. As such, it reflects the best aspects of the continued soul of our European folk. For the truth is that the so-called "Dark Ages" were really the *Living Ages*, as every interaction was with an intelligent, organismic entity and perceived as within a like-wise Holism. Whereas commercial and, now, mechanical interactions have robbed life of its natural depth, our past kinsfolk lived fully amidst its inherent living complexity. For our ancestors, all of the world was an orderly, living organism, interdependent and related; all the world was a manifestation of the living nature god-head.

The Greeks and Romans were both peoples originally from the North, both spoke Indo-European languages, and both had many cultural traits familiar to our own. This connection is particularly evident with the Romans, and it was a difficult decision to omit works by the Romans, including Virgil's *Aeneid*, Plutarch's *Lives*, the especially insightful works by Julius Caesar and Tacitus on Gaul and Germania, and so on. Likewise, there are strong relations to be found in Slavic literature and such Eastern European history as Nestor's *Tales of Past Years*, but a choice was made to specifically feature the continuous inner path of the Western and Northern Europeans, in no small part because the *Lore* already exceeds 5,000,000 words. Perhaps these deficiencies and others will be remedied in future editions.

The fundamental nature of reality and our own spiritual instincts remain the same as when our ancestors wrote the works that follow. All that has really changed are the form and pervasiveness of the illusions and confutations we face. We can find inspiration in the like-minded revival of the old truths by certain Romantics, several of whom are included in the latter sections of the *Lore* for the beauty and authenticity of their continuations. These recent ancestors remind us that we can today still listen to and learn from the wisdom of our ancient kinsmen, and thereby rekindle within our hearts the truth of our blood, our world, and our soul.

Not only *can* we do this, but this what we *must* do! For it is the path back to reality, back to truth, and back to Nature in all of Her beautiful splendor. The works in the *Lore* are not merely historical relics; they are a sacred heirloom which has been passed to you so that you may live as accords your natural being. Listen to the *Lore of the Kinsfolk* and hear in the spirits of your ancestors your own living nature. And for you who hearken to the call of your forefathers, may their words cause your heart and mind to follow the wisdom of heroes over the wending path of time and fate.

— D.S. Blais, Vinland, December 2017

Marie de France: Lays

PROLOGUE

Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. If a great truth is proclaimed in the ears of men, it brings forth fruit a hundred-fold; but when the sweetness of the telling is praised of many, flowers mingle with the fruit upon the branch.

According to the witness of Priscian, it was the custom of ancient writers to express obscurely some portions of their books, so that those who came after might study with greater diligence to find the thought within their words. The philosophers knew this well, and were the more unwearied in labour, the more subtle in distinctions, so that the truth might make them free. They were persuaded that he who would keep himself unspotted from the world should search for knowledge, that he might understand. To set evil from me, and to put away my grief, I purposed to commence a book. I considered within myself what fair story in the Latin or Romance I could turn into the common tongue. But I found that all the stories had been written, and scarcely it seemed the worth my doing, what so many had already done. Then I called to mind those Lays I had so often heard. I doubted nothing?for well I know?that our fathers fashioned them, that men should bear in remembrance the deeds of those who have gone before. Many a one, on many a day, the minstrel has chanted to my ear. I would not that they should perish, forgotten, by the roadside. In my turn, therefore, I have made of them a song, rhymed as well as I am able, and often has their shaping kept me sleepless in my bed.

In your honour, most noble and courteous King, to whom joy is a handmaid, and in whose heart all gracious things are rooted, I have brought together these Lays, and told my tales in seemly rhyme. Ere they speak for me, let me speak with my own mouth, and say, "Sire, I offer you these verses. If you are pleased to receive them, the fairer happiness will be mine, and the more lightly I shall go all the days of my life. Do not deem that I think more highly of myself than I ought to think, since I presume to proffer this, my gift." Hearken now to the commencement of the matter.

THE LAY OF GUGEMAR

Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. When the minstrel tells his tale, let the folk about the fire heed him willingly. For his part the singer must be wary not to spoil good music with unseemly words. Listen, oh lordlings, to the words of Marie, for she pains herself grievously not to forget this thing. The craft is hard—then approve the more sweetly him who carols the tune. But this is the way of the world, that when a man or woman sings more tunably than his fellows, those about the fire fall upon him, pell-mell, for reason of their envy. They rehearse diligently the faults of his song, and steal away his praise with evil words. I will brand these folk as they deserve. They, and such as they, are like mad dogs—cowardly and felon—who traitorously bring to death men better than themselves. Now let the japer, and the smiler with his knife, do me what harm they may. Verily they are in their right to speak ill of me.

Hearken, oh gentles, to the tale I set before you, for thereof the Bretons already have made a Lay. I will not do it harm by many words, and here is the commencement of the matter. According to text and scripture, now I relate a certain adventure,

which bechanced in the realm of Brittany, in days long gone before.

In that time when Arthur maintained his realm, the now in peace, the now in war, the King counted amongst his vassals a certain baron, named Oridial. This knight was lord of Leon, and was very near to his prince's heart, both in council chamber and in field. From his wife he had gotten two children, the one a son and the other a fair daughter. Nogent, he had called the damsel at the font, and the dansellon was named Gugemar—no goodlier might be found in any realm. His mother had set all her love upon the lad, and his father shewed him every good that he was able. When the varlet was no more a child, Oridial sent him to the King, to be trained as a page in the courtesies of the Court. Right serviceable was he in his station, and meetly praised of all. The term of his service having come, and he being found of fitting years and knowledge, the King made him knight with his own hand, and armed him in rich harness, according to his wish. So Gugemar gave gifts to all those about his person, and bidding farewell, took leave, and departed from the Court. Gugemar went his way to Flanders, being desirous of advancement, for in that kingdom ever they have strife and war. Neither in Loraine nor Burgundy, Anjou nor Gascony, might be found in that day a better knight than he, no, nor one his peer. He had but one fault, since of love he took no care. There was neither dame nor maiden beneath the sky, however dainty and kind, to whom he gave thought or heed, though had he required her love of any damsel, very willingly would she have granted his desire. Many there were who prayed him for his love, but might have no kiss in return. So seeing that he refrained his heart in this fashion, men deemed him a strange man, and one fallen into a perilous case.

In the flower of his deeds the good knight returned to his own land, that he might see again his father and lord, his mother and his sister, even as he very tenderly desired. He lodged with them for the space of a long month, and at the end of that time had envy to hunt within the wood. The night being come, Gugemar summoned his prickers and his squires, and early in the morning rode within the forest. Great pleasure had Gugemar in the woodland, and much he delighted in the chase. A tall stag was presently started, and the hounds being uncoupled, all hastened in pursuit—the huntsmen before, and the good knight following after, winding upon his horn. Gugemar rode at a great pace after the quarry, a varlet riding beside, bearing his bow, his arrows and his spear. He followed so hotly that he over-passed the chase. Gazing about him he marked, within a thicket, a doe hiding with her fawn. Very white and wonderful was this beast, for she was without spot, and bore antlers upon her head. The hounds bayed about her, but might not pull her down. Gugemar bent his bow, and loosed a shaft at the quarry. He wounded the deer a little above the hoof, so that presently she fell upon her side. But the arrow glanced away, and returning upon itself, struck Gugemar in the thigh, so grievously, that straightway he fell from his horse upon the ground. Gugemar lay upon the grass, beside the deer which he had wounded to his hurt. He heard her sighs and groans, and perceived the bitterness of her pity. Then with mortal speech the doe spake to the wounded man in such fashion as this, "Alas, my sorrow, for now am I slain. But thou, Vassal, who hast done me this great wrong, do not think to hide from the vengeance of thy destiny. Never may surgeon and his medicine heal your hurt.

Neither herb nor root nor potion can ever cure the wound within your flesh: For that there is no healing. The only balm to close that sore must be brought by a woman, who for her love will suffer such pain and sorrow as no woman in the world has endured before. And to the dolorous lady, dolorous knight. For your part you shall do and suffer so great things for her, that not a lover beneath the sun, or lovers who are dead, or lovers who yet shall have their day, but shall marvel at the tale. Now, go from hence, and let me die in peace.”

Gugemar was wounded twice over—by the arrow, and by the words he was dismayed to hear. He considered within himself to what land he must go to find this healing for his hurt, for he was yet too young to die. He saw clearly, and told it to his heart, that there was no lady in his life to whom he could run for pity, and be made whole of his wound. He called his varlet before him,

“Friend,” said he, “go forthwith, and bring my comrades to this place, for I have to speak with them.”

The varlet went upon his errand, leaving his master sick with the heat and fever of his hurt. When he was gone, Gugemar tore the hem from his shirt, and bound it straitly about his wound. He climbed painfully upon the saddle, and departed without more ado, for he was with child to be gone before any could come to stay him from his purpose. A green path led through the deep forest to the plain, and his way across the plain brought him to a cliff, exceeding high, and to the sea. Gugemar looked upon the water, which was very still, for this fair harbourage was land-locked from the main. Upon this harbour lay one only vessel, bearing a rich pavilion of silk, daintily furnished both without and within, and well it seemed to Gugemar that he had seen this ship before. Beneath the sky was no ship so rich or precious, for there was not a sail but was spun of silk, and not a plank, from keel to mast, but showed of ebony. Too fair was the nave for mortal man, and Gugemar held it in sore displeasure. He marvelled greatly from what country it had come, and wondered long concerning this harbour, and the ship that lay therein. Gugemar got him down from his horse upon the shore, and with mighty pain and labour climbed within the ship. He trusted to find merchantmen and sailors therein, but there was none to guard, and none he saw. Now within the pavilion was a very rich bed, carved by cunning workmen in the days of King Solomon. This fair bed was wrought of cypress wood and white ivory, adorned with gold and gems most precious. Right sweet were the linen cloths upon the bed, and so soft the pillow, that he who lay thereon would sleep, were he sadder than any other in the world. The counterpane was of purple from the vats of Alexandria, and over all was set a right fair coverlet of cloth of gold. The pavilion was litten by two great waxen torches, placed in candlesticks of fine gold, decked with jewels worth a lord’s ransom. So the wounded knight looked on ship and pavilion, bed and candle, and marvelled greatly. Gugemar sat him down upon the bed for a little, because of the anguish of his wound. After he had rested a space he got upon his feet, that he might quit the vessel, but he found that for him there was no return. A gentle wind had filled the sails, and already he was in the open sea. When Gugemar saw that he was far from land, he was very heavy and sorrowful. He knew not what to do, by reason of the mightiness of his hurt. But he must endure the adventure as best he was able; so he prayed to God to take him in His keeping, and in His good pleasure to bring him safe to port, and deliver him from the peril of death. Then climbing upon the couch, he laid his head upon the pillow, and slept as one dead, until, with vespers, the ship drew to that haven where he might find the healing for his hurt.

Gugemar had come to an ancient city, where the King of that realm held his court and state. This King was full of years, and was wedded to a dame of high degree. The lady was of tender age, passing fresh and fair, and sweet of speech to all. Therefore was the King jealous of his wife beyond all measure. Such is the wont of age, for much it fears that old and young cannot mate together, and that youth will turn to youth. This is the death in life of the old.

The castle of this ancient lord had a mighty keep. Beneath this tower was a right fair orchard, together with a close, shut in by a wall of green marble, very strong and high. This wall had one only

gate, and the door was watched of warders, both night and day. On the other side of this garden was the sea, so that none might do his errand in the castle therefrom, save in a boat. To hold his dame in the greater surety, the King had built a bower within the wall; there was no fairer chamber beneath the sun. The first room was the Queen’s chapel. Beyond this was the lady’s bedchamber, painted all over with shapes and colours most wonderful to behold. On one wall might be seen Dame Venus, the goddess of Love, sweetly flushed as when she walked the water, lovely as life, teaching men how they should bear them in loyal service to their lady. On another wall, the goddess threw Ovid’s book within a fire of coals. A scroll issuing from her lips proclaimed that those who read therein, and strove to ease them of their pains, would find from her neither service nor favour. In this chamber the lady was put in ward, and with her a certain maiden to hold her company. This damsel was her niece, since she was her sister’s child, and there was great love betwixt the twain. When the Queen walked within the garden, or went abroad, this maiden was ever by her side, and came again with her to the house. Save this damsel, neither man nor woman entered in the bower, nor issued forth from out the wall. One only man possessed the key of the postern, an aged priest, very white and frail. This priest recited the service of God within the chapel, and served the Queen’s plate and cup when she ate meat at table.

Now, on a day, the Queen had fallen asleep after meat, and on her awaking would walk a little in the garden. She called her companion to her, and the two went forth to be glad amongst the flowers. As they looked across the sea they marked a ship drawing near the land, rising and falling upon the waves. Very fearful was the Queen thereat, for the vessel came to anchorage, though there was no helmsman to direct her course. The dame’s face became sanguine for dread, and she turned her about to flee, because of her exceeding fear. Her maiden, who was of more courage than she, stayed her mistress with many comforting words. For her part she was very desirous to know what this thing meant. She hastened to the shore, and laying aside her mantle, climbed within this wondrous vessel. Thereon she found no living soul, save only the knight sleeping fast within the pavilion. The damsel looked long upon the knight, for pale he was as wax, and well she deemed him dead. She returned forthwith to the Queen, and told her of this marvel, and of the good knight who was slain.

“Let us go together on the ship,” replied the lady. “If he be dead we may give him fitting burial, and the priest shall pray meetly for his soul. Should he be yet alive perchance he will speak, and tell us of his case.”

Without more tarrying the two damsels mounted on the ship, the lady before, and her maiden following after. When the Queen entered in the pavilion she stayed her feet before the bed, for joy and grief of what she saw. She might not refrain her eyes from gazing on the knight, for her heart was ravished with his beauty, and she sorrowed beyond measure, because of his grievous hurt. To herself she said, “In a bad hour cometh the goodly youth.” She drew near the bed, and placing her hand upon his breast, found that the flesh was warm, and that the heart beat strongly in his side. Gugemar awoke at the touch, and saluted the dame as sweetly as he was able, for well he knew that he had come to a Christian land. The lady, full of thought, returned him his salutation right courteously, though the tears were yet in her eyes. Straightway she asked of him from what realm he came, and of what people, and in what war he had taken his hurt.

“Lady,” answered Gugemar, “in no battle I received this wound. If it pleases you to hear my tale I will tell you the truth, and in nothing will I lie. I am a knight of Little Brittany. Yesterday I chased a wonderful white deer within the forest. The shaft with which I struck her to my hurt, returned again on me, and caused this wound upon my thigh, which may never be searched, nor made whole. For this wondrous Beast raised her plaint in a mortal tongue. She cursed me loudly, with many evil words, swearing that never might this sore be healed, save by one only damsel in the world, and her I know not where to find. When I heard my luckless fate I left the wood with what speed I might, and coming to a harbour, not far from thence, I lighted on this ship. For my sins I climbed therein. Then without oars or helm this boat ravished

me from shore; so that I know not where I have come, nor what is the name of this city. Fair lady, for God's love, counsel me of your good grace, for I know not where to turn, nor how to govern the ship."

The lady made answer, "Fair sir, willingly shall I give you such good counsel as I may. This realm and city are the appanage of my husband. He is a right rich lord, of high lineage, but old and very full of years. Also he is jealous beyond all measure; therefore it is that I see you now. By reason of his jealousy he has shut me fast between high walls, entered by one narrow door, with an ancient priest to keep the key. May God requite him for his deed. Night and day I am guarded in this prison, from whence I may never go forth, without the knowledge of my lord. Here are my chamber and my chapel, and here I live, with this, my maiden, to bear me company. If it pleases you to dwell here for a little, till you may pass upon your way, right gladly we shall receive you, and with a good heart we will tend your wound, till you are healed."

When Gugemar heard this speech he rejoiced greatly. He thanked the lady with many sweet words, and consented to sojourn in her hall awhile. He raised himself upon his couch, and by the courtesy of the damsels left the ship. Leaning heavily upon the lady, at the end he won to her maiden's chamber, where there was a fair bed covered with a rich dossal of brodered silk, edged with fur. When he was entered in this bed, the damsels came bearing clear water in basins of gold, for the cleansing of his hurt. They stanchd the blood with a towel of fine linen, and bound the wound strictly, to his exceeding comfort. So after the vesper meal was eaten, the lady departed to her own chamber, leaving the knight in much ease and content.

Now Gugemar set his love so fondly upon the lady that he forgot his father's house. He thought no more of the anguish of his hurt, because of another wound that was beneath his breast. He tossed and sighed in his unrest, and prayed the maiden of his service to depart, so that he might sleep a little. When the maid was gone, Gugemar considered within himself whether he might seek the dame, to know whether her heart was warmed by any ember of the flame that burned in his. He turned it this way and that, and knew not what to do. This only was clear, that if the lady refused to search his wound, death, for him, was sure and speedy.

"Alas," said he, "what shall I do! Shall I go to my lady, and pray her pity on the wretch who has none to give him counsel? If she refuse my prayer, because of her hardness and pride, I shall know there is nought for me but to die in my sorrow, or, at least, to go heavily all the days of my life."

Then he sighed, and in his sighing lighted on a better purpose; for he said within himself that doubtless he was born to suffer, and that the best of him was tears. All the long night he spent in vigil and groanings and watchfulness. To himself he told over her words and her semblance. He remembered the eyes and the fair mouth of his lady, and all the grace and the sweetness, which had struck like a knife at his heart. Between his teeth he cried on her for pity, and for a little more would have called her to his side. Ah, had he but known the fever of the lady, and how terrible a lord to her was Love, how great had been his joy and solace. His visage would have been the more sanguine, which was now so pale of colour, because of the dolour that was his. But if the knight was sick by reason of his love, the dame had small cause to boast herself of health. The lady rose early from her bed, since she might not sleep. She complained of her unrest, and of Love who rode her so hardly. The maiden, who was of her company, saw clearly enough that all her lady's thoughts were set upon the knight, who, for his healing, sojourned in the chamber. She did not know whether his thoughts were given again to the dame. When, therefore, the lady had entered in the chapel, the damsel went straightway to the knight. He welcomed her gladly, and bade her be seated near the bed. Then he inquired, "Friend, where now is my lady, and why did she rise so early from her bed?"

Having spoken so far, he became silent, and sighed.

"Sir," replied the maiden softly, "you love, and are discreet, but be not too discreet therein. In such a love as yours there is nothing to be ashamed. He who may win my lady's favour has every reason to be proud of his fortune. Altogether seemly would be your friendship, for you are young, and she is fair."

The knight made answer to the maiden, "I am so fast in the snare, that I pray the fowler to slay me, if she may not free me from the net. Counsel me, fair sweet friend, if I may hope of kindness at her hand."

Then the maiden of her sweetness comforted the knight, and assured him of all the good that she was able. So courteous and debonaire was the maid.

When the lady had heard Mass, she hastened back to the chamber. She had not forgotten her friend, and greatly she desired to know whether he was awake or asleep, of whom her heart was fain. She bade her maiden to summon him to her chamber, for she had a certain thing in her heart to show him at leisure, were it for the joy or the sorrow of their days.

Gugemar saluted the lady, and the dame returned the knight his courtesies, but their hearts were too fearful for speech. The knight dared ask nothing of his lady, for reason that he was a stranger in a strange land, and was adread to show her his love. But—as says the proverb—he who will not tell of his sore, may not hope for balm to his hurt. Love is a privy wound within the heart, and none knoweth of that bitterness but the heart alone. Love is an evil which may last for a whole life long, because of man and his constant heart. Many there be who make of Love a gibe and a jest, and with specious words defame him by boastful tales. But theirs is not love. Rather it is folly and lightness, and the tune of a merry song. But let him who has found a constant lover prize her above rubies, and serve her with loyal service, being altogether at her will. Gugemar loved in this fashion, and therefore Love came swiftly to his aid. Love put words in his mouth, and courage in his heart, so that his hope might be made plain.

"Lady," said he, "I die for your love. I am in fever because of my wound, and if you care not to heal my hurt I would rather die. Fair friend, I pray you for grace. Do not gainsay me with evil words."

The lady hearkened with a smile to Gugemar's speech. Right daintily and sweetly she replied, "Friend, yea is not a word of two letters. I do not grant such a prayer every day of the week, and must you have your gift so quickly?"

"Lady," cried he, "for God's sake pity me, and take it not amiss. She, who loves lightly, may make her lover pray for long, so that she may hide how often her feet have trodden the pathway with another friend. But the honest dame, when she has once given her heart to a friend, will not deny his wish because of pride. The rather she will find her pride in humbleness, and love him again with the same love he has set on her. So they will be glad together, and since none will have knowledge or hearing of the matter, they will rejoice in their youth. Fair, sweet lady, be this thy pleasure?"

When the lady heard these words well she found them honest and true. Therefore without further prayings and ado she granted Gugemar her love and her kiss. Henceforward Gugemar lived greatly at his ease, for he had sight and speech of his friend, and many a time she granted him her embrace and tenderness, as is the wont of lovers when alone.

For a year and a half Gugemar dwelt with his lady, in solace and great delight. Then Fortune turned her wheel, and in a trice cast those down, whose seat had been so high. Thus it chanced to them, for they were spied upon and seen.

On a morning in summer time the Queen and the damoiseau sat fondly together. The knight embraced her, eyes and face, but the lady stayed him, saying, "Fair sweet friend, my heart tells me that I shall lose you soon, for this hidden thing will quickly be made clear. If you are slain, may the same sword kill me. But if you win forth, well I know that you will find another love, and that I shall be left alone with my thoughts. Were I parted from you, may God give me neither joy, nor rest, nor peace, if I would seek another friend. Of that you need have no fear. Friend, for surety and comfort of my heart deliver me now some sark of thine. Therein I will set a knot, and make this covenant with you, that never will you put your love on dame or maiden, save only on her who shall first unfasten this knot. Then you will ever keep faith with me, for so cunning shall be my craft, that no woman may hope to unravel that coil, either by force or guile, or even with her knife."

So the knight rendered the sark to his lady, and made such bargain as she wished, for the peace and assurance of her mind.

For his part the knight took a fair girdle, and girt it closely about the lady's middle. Right secret was the clasp and buckle of this girdle. Therefore he required of the dame that she would never grant her love, save to him only, who might free her from the strictness of this bond, without injury to band or clasp. Then they kissed together, and entered into such covenant as you have heard.

That very day their hidden love was made plain to men. A certain chamberlain was sent by that ancient lord with a message to the Queen. This unlucky wretch, finding that in no wise could he enter within the chamber, looked through the window, and saw. Forthwith he hastened to the King, and told him that which he had seen. When the aged lord understood these words, never was there a sadder man than he. He called together the most trusty sergeants of his guard, and coming with them to the Queen's chamber, bade them to thrust in the door. When Gugemar was found therein, the King commanded that he should be slain with the sword, by reason of the anguish that was his. Gugemar was in no whit dismayed by the threat. He started to his feet, and gazing round, marked a stout rod of fir, on which it is the use for linen to be hung. This he took in hand, and faced his foes, bidding them have a care, for he would do a mischief to them all. The King looked earnestly upon the fearless knight, inquiring of him who he was, and where he was born, and in what manner he came to dwell within his house. So Gugemar told over to him this story of his fate. He showed him of the Beast that he had wounded to his hurt; of the nave, and of his bitter wound; of how he came within the realm, and of the lady's surgery. He told all to the ancient lord, to the last moment when he stood within his power. The King replied that he gave no credence to his word, nor believed that the story ran as he had said. If, however, the vessel might be found, he would commit the knight again to the waves. He would go the more heavily for the knight's saining, and a glad day would it be if he made shipwreck at sea. When they had entered into this covenant together, they went forth to the harbour, and there discovered the barge, even as Gugemar had said. So they set him thereon, and prayed him to return unto his own realm.

Without sail or oar the ship parted from that coast, with no further tarrying. The knight wept and wrung his hands, complaining of his lady's loss, and of her cherishing. He prayed the mighty God to grant him speedy death, and never to bring him home, save to meet again with her who was more desirable than life. Whilst he was yet at his orisons, the ship drew again to that port, from whence she had first come. Gugemar made haste to get him from the vessel, so that he might the more swiftly return to his own land. He had gone but a little way when he was aware of a squire of his household, riding in the company of a certain knight. This squire held the bridle of a destrier in his hand, though no man rode thereon. Gugemar called to him by name, so that the varlet looking upon him, knew again his lord. He got him to his feet, and bringing the destrier to his master, set the knight thereon. Great was the joy, and merry was the feast, when Gugemar returned to his own realm. But though his friends did all that they were able, neither song nor game could cheer the knight, nor turn him from dwelling in his unhappy thoughts. For peace of mind they urged that he took to himself a wife, but Gugemar would have none of their counsel. Never would he wed a wife, on any day, either for love or for wealth, save only that she might first unloose the knot within his shirt. When this news was noised about the country, there was neither dame nor damsel in the realm of Brittany, but essayed to unfasten the knot. But there was no lady who could gain to her wish, whether by force or guile.

Now will I show of that lady, whom Gugemar so fondly loved. By the counsel of a certain baron the ancient King set his wife in prison. She was shut fast in a tower of grey marble, where her days were bad, and her nights worse. No man could make clear to you the great pain, the anguish and the dolour, that she suffered in this tower, wherein, I protest, she died daily. Two years and more she lay bound in prison, where warders came, but never joy or delight. Often she thought upon her friend.

"Gugemar, dear lord, in an evil hour I saw you with my eyes. Better for me that I die quickly, than endure longer my evil lot. Fair friend, if I could but win to that coast whence you sailed, very swiftly would I fling myself in the sea, and end my wretched

life." When she had said these words she rose to her feet, and coming to the door was amazed to find therein neither bolt nor key. She issued forth, without challenge from sergeant or warder, and hastening to the harbour, found there her lover's ship, made fast to that very rock, from which she would cast her down. When she saw the barge she climbed thereon, but presently bethought her that on this nave her friend had gone to perish in the sea. At this thought she would have fled again to the shore, but her bones were as water, and she fell upon the deck. So in sore travail and sorrow, the vessel carried her across the waves, to a port of Brittany, guarded by a castle, strong and very fair. Now the lord of this castle was named Meriadus. He was a right warlike prince, and had made him ready to fight with the prince of a country near by. He had risen very early in the morning, to send forth a great company of spears, the more easily to ravage this neighbour's realm. Meriadus looked forth from his window, and marked the ship which came to port. He hastened down the steps of the perron, and calling to his chamberlain, came with what speed he might to the nave. Then mounting the ladder he stood upon the deck. When Meriadus found within the ship a dame, who for beauty seemed rather a fay than a mere earthly woman, he seized her by her mantle, and brought her swiftly to his keep. Right joyous was he because of his good fortune, for lovely was the lady beyond mortal measure. He made no question as to who had set her on the barge. He knew only that she was fair, and of high lineage, and that his heart turned towards her with so hot a love as never before had he put on dame or damsel. Now there dwelt within the castle a sister of this lord, who was yet unwed. Meriadus bestowed the lady in his sister's chamber, because it was the fairest in the tower. Moreover he commanded that she should be meetly served, and held in all reverence. But though the dame was so richly clothed and cherished, ever was she sad and deep in thought. Meriadus came often to cheer her with mirth and speech, by reason that he wished to gain her love as a free gift, and not by force. It was in vain that he prayed her for grace, since she had no balm for his wound. For answer she showed him the girdle about her body, saying that never would she give her love to man, save only to him who might unloose the buckle of that girdle, without harm to belt or clasp. When Meriadus heard these words, he spoke in haste and said,

"Lady, there dwells in this country a very worthy knight, who will take no woman as wife, except she first untie a certain crafty knot in the hem of a shirt, and that without force or knife. For a little I would wager that it was you who tied this knot."

When the lady heard thereof her breath went from her, and near she came to falling on the ground. Meriadus caught her in his arms, and cut the laces of her bodice, that she might have the more air. He strove to unfasten her girdle, but might not dissever the clasp. Yea, though every knight in the realm essayed to unfasten that cincture, it would not yield, except to one alone.

Now Meriadus made the lists ready for a great jousting, and called to that tournament all the knights who would aid him in his war. Many a lord came at his bidding, and with them Gugemar, amongst the first. Meriadus had sent letters to the knight, beseeching him, as friend and companion, not to fail him in this business. So Gugemar hastened to the need of his lord, and at his back more than one hundred spears. All these Meriadus welcomed very gladly, and gave them lodging within his tower. In honour of his guest, the prince sent two gentlemen to his sister, praying her to attire herself richly, and come to hall, together with the dame whom he loved so dearly well. These did as they were bidden, and arrayed in their sweetest vesture, presently entered in the hall, holding each other by the hand. Very pale and pensive was the lady, but when she heard her lover's name her feet failed beneath her, and had not the maiden held her fast, she would have fallen on the floor. Gugemar rose from his seat at the sight of the dame, her fashion and her semblance, and stood staring upon her. He went a little apart, and said within himself, "Can this be my sweet friend, my hope, my heart, my life, the fair lady who gave me the grace of her love? From whence comes she; who might have brought her to this far land? But I speak in my folly, for well I know that this is not my dear. A little red, a little white, and all women are thus shapen. My thoughts are troubled, by reason that

the sweetness of this lady resembles the sweetness of that other, for whom my heart sighs and trembles. Yet needs must that I have speech of the lady.”

Gugemar drew near to the dame. He kissed her courteously, and found no word to utter, save to pray that he might be seated at her side. Meriadus spied upon them closely, and was the more heavy because of their trouble. Therefore he feigned mirth.

“Gugemar, dear lord, if it pleases you, let this damsel essay to untie the knot of your sark, if so be she may loosen the coil.”

Gugemar made answer that very willingly he would do this thing. He called to him a squire who had the shirt in keeping, and bade him seek his charge, and deliver it to the dame. The lady took the sark in hand. Well she knew the knot that she had tied so cunningly, and was so willing to unloose; but for reason of the trouble at her heart, she did not dare essay. Meriadus marked the distress of the damsel, and was more sorrowful than ever was lover before.

“Lady,” said he, “do all that you are able to unfasten this coil.”

So at his commandment she took again to her the hem of the shirt, and lightly and easily unravelled the tie.

Gugemar marvelled greatly when he saw this thing. His heart told him that of a truth this was his lady, but he could not give faith to his eyes.

“Friend, are you indeed the sweet comrade I have known? Tell me truly now, is there about your body the girdle with which I girt you in your own realm?”

He set his hands to her waist, and found that the secret belt was yet about her sides.

“Fair sweet friend, tell me now by what adventure I find you here, and who has brought you to this tower?”

So the lady told over to her friend the pain and the anguish and the dolour of the prison in which she was held; of how it chanced that she fled from her dungeon, and lighting upon a ship, entered therein, and came to this fair haven; of how Meriadus took her from the barge, but kept her in all honour, save only that ever he sought for her love; “but now, fair friend, all is well, for you hold your lady in your arms.”

Gugemar stood upon his feet, and beckoned with his hand.

“Lords,” he cried, “hearken now to me. I have found my friend, whom I have lost for a great while. Before you all I pray and require of Meriadus to yield me my own. For this grace I give him open thanks. Moreover I will kneel down, and become his liege man. For two years, or three, if he will, I will bargain to serve in his quarrels, and with me, of riders, a hundred or more at my back.”

Then answered Meriadus, “Gugemar, fair friend, I am not yet so shaken or overborne in war, that I must do as you wish, right humbly. This woman is my captive. I found her: I hold her: and I will defend my right against you and all your power.”

When Gugemar heard these proud words he got to horse speedily, him and all his company. He threw down his glove, and parted in anger from the tower. But he went right heavily, since he must leave behind his friend. In his train rode all those knights who had drawn together to that town for the great tournament. Not a knight of them all but plighted faith to follow where he led, and to hold himself recreant and shamed if he failed his oath.

That same night the band came to the castle of the prince with whom Meriadus was at war. He welcomed them very gladly, and gave them lodging in his tower. By their aid he had good hope to bring this quarrel to an end. Very early in the morning the host came together to set the battle in array. With clash of mail and noise of horns they issued from the city gate, Gugemar riding at their head. They drew before the castle where Meriadus lay in strength, and sought to take it by storm. But the keep was very strong, and Meriadus bore himself as a stout and valiant knight. So Gugemar, like a wary captain, sat himself down before the town, till all the folk of that place were deemed by friend and sergeant to be weak with hunger. Then they took that high keep with the sword, and burnt it with fire. The lord thereof they slew in his own hall; but Gugemar came forth, after such labours as you have heard, bearing his lady with him, to return in peace to his own land.

From this adventure that I have told you, has come the Lay that minstrels chant to harp and viol—fair is that song and sweet the tune.

THE LAY OF THE DOLOROUS KNIGHT

Hearken now to the Lay that once I heard a minstrel chanting to his harp. In surety of its truth I will name the city where this story passed. The Lay of the Dolorous Knight, my harper called his song, but of those who hearkened, some named it rather, The Lay of the Four Sorrows.

In Nantes, of Brittany, there dwelt a dame who was dearly held of all, for reason of the much good that was found in her. This lady was passing fair of body, apt in book as any clerk, and meetly schooled in every grace that it becometh dame to have. So gracious of person was this damsel, that throughout the realm there was no knight could refrain from setting his heart upon her, though he saw her but one only time. Although the demoiselle might not return the love of so many, certainly she had no wish to slay them all. Better by far that a man pray and require in love all the dames of his country, than run mad in woods for the bright eyes of one. Therefore this dame gave courtesy and good will to each alike. Even when she might not hear a lover's words, so sweetly she denied his wish that the more he held her dear and was the more her servant for that fond denial. So because of her great riches of body and of heart, this lady of whom I tell, was prayed and required in love by the lords of her country, both by night and by day.

Now in Brittany lived four young barons, but their names I cannot tell. It is enough that they were desirable in the eyes of maidens for reason of their beauty, and that men esteemed them because they were courteous of manner and open of hand. Moreover they were stout and hardy knights amongst the spears, and rich and worthy gentlemen of those very parts. Each of these four knights had set his heart upon the lady, and for love of her pained himself mightily, and did all that he was able, so that by any means he might gain her favour. Each prayed her privily for her love, and strove all that he could to make him worthy of the gift, above his fellows. For her part the lady was sore perplexed, and considered in her mind very earnestly, which of these four knights she should take as friend. But since they all were loyal and worthy gentlemen, she durst not choose amongst them; for she would not slay three lovers with her hand so that one might have content. Therefore to each and all, the dame made herself fair and sweet of semblance. Gifts she gave to all alike. Tender messages she sent to each. Every knight deemed himself esteemed and favoured above his fellows, and by soft words and fair service diligently strove to please. When the knights gathered together for the games, each of these lords contended earnestly for the prize, so that he might be first, and draw on him the favour of his dame. Each held her for his friend. Each bore upon him her gift—pennon, or sleeve, or ring. Each cried her name within the lists.

Now when Eastertide was come, a great tournament was proclaimed to be held beyond the walls of Nantes, that rich city. The four lovers were the appellants in this tourney, and from every realm knights rode to break a lance in honour of their dame. Frenchman and Norman and Fleming; the hardest knights of Brabant, Boulogne and Anjou; each came to do his devoir in the field. Nor was the chivalry of Nantes backward in this quarrel, but till the vespers of the tournament was come, they stayed themselves within the lists, and struck stoutly for their lord. After the four lovers had laced their harness upon them, they issued forth from the city, followed by the knights who were of their company in this adventure. But upon the four fell the burden of the day, for they were known of all by the embroidered arms upon their surcoat, and the device fashioned on the shield. Now against the four lovers arrayed themselves four other knights, armed altogether in coats of mail, and helmets and gauntlets of steel. Of these stranger knights two were of Hainault, and the two others were Flemings. When the four lovers saw their adversaries prepare themselves for the combat, they had little desire to flee, but hastened to join them in battle. Each lowered his spear, and choosing his enemy, met

him so eagerly that all men wondered, for horse and man fell to the earth. The four lovers recked little of their destriers, but freeing their feet from the stirrups bent over the fallen foe, and called on him to yield. When the friends of the vanquished knights saw their case, they hastened to their succour; so for their rescue there was a great press, and many a mighty stroke with the sword.

The damsel stood upon a tower to watch these feats of arms. By their blazoned coats and shields she knew her knights; she saw their marvellous deeds, yet might not say who did best, nor give to one the praise. But the tournament was no longer a seemly and ordered battle. The ranks of the two companies were confused together, so that every man fought against his fellow, and none might tell whether he struck his comrade or his foe. The four lovers did well and worshipfully, so that all men deemed them worthy of the prize. But when evening was come, and the sport drew to its close, their courage led them to folly. Having ventured too far from their companions, they were set upon by their adversaries, and assailed so fiercely that three were slain outright. As to the fourth he yet lived, but altogether mauled and shaken, for his thigh was broken, and a spear head remained in his side. The four bodies were fallen on the field, and lay with those who had perished in that day. But because of the great mischief these four lovers had done their adversaries, their shields were cast despitefully without the lists; but in this their foemen did wrongfully, and all men held them in sore displeasure.

Great were the lamentation and the cry when the news of this mischance was noised about the city. Such a tumult of mourning was never before heard, for the whole city was moved. All men hastened forth to the place where the lists were set. Meety to mourn the dead there rode nigh upon two thousand knights, with hauberks unlaced, and uncovered heads, plucking upon their beards. So the four lovers were placed each upon his shield, and being brought back in honour to Nantes, were carried to the house of that dame, whom so greatly they had loved. When the lady knew this distressful adventure, straightway she fell to the ground. Being returned from her swoon, she made her complaint, calling upon her lovers each by his name.

"Alas," said she, "what shall I do, for never shall I know happiness again. These four knights had set their hearts upon me, and despite their great treasure, esteemed my love as richer than all their wealth. Alas, for the fair and valiant knight! Alas, for the loyal and generous man! By gifts such as these they sought to gain my favour, but how might lady bereave three of life, so as to cherish one. Even now I cannot tell for whom I have most pity, or who was closest to my mind. But three are dead, and one is sore stricken; neither is there anything in the world which can bring me comfort. Only this is there to do—to give the slain men seemly burial, and, if it may be, to heal their comrade of his wounds."

So, because of her great love and nobleness, the lady caused these three distressful knights to be buried well and worshipfully in a rich abbey. In that place she offered their Mass penny, and gave rich offerings of silver and of lights besides. May God have mercy on them in that day. As for the wounded knight she commanded him to be carried to her own chamber. She sent for surgeons, and gave him into their hands. These searched his wounds so skilfully, and tended him with so great care, that presently his hurt commenced to heal. Very often was the lady in the chamber, and very tenderly she cherished the stricken man. Yet ever she felt pity for the three Knights of the Sorrows, and ever she went heavily by reason of their deaths.

Now on a summer's day, the lady and the knight sat together after meat. She called to mind the sorrow that was hers; so that, in a space, her head fell upon her breast, and she gave herself altogether to her grief. The knight looked earnestly upon his dame. Well he might see that she was far away, and clearly he perceived the cause.

"Lady," said he, "you are in sorrow. Open now your grief to me. If you tell me what is in your heart perchance I may find you comfort."

"Fair friend," replied she, "I think of what is gone, and remember your companions, who are dead. Never was lady of my peerage, however fair and good and gracious, ever loved by four such valiant gentlemen, nor ever lost them in one single day. Save you—

who were so maimed and in such peril—all are gone. Therefore I call to mind those who loved me so dearly, and am the saddest lady beneath the sun. To remember these things, of you four I shall make a Lay, and will call it the Lay of the Four Sorrows."

When the knight heard these words he made answer very swiftly, "Lady, name it not the Lay of the Four Sorrows, but, rather, the Lay of the Dolorous Knight. Would you hear the reason why it should bear this name? My three comrades have finished their course; they have nothing more to hope of their life. They are gone, and with them the pang of their great sorrow, and the knowledge of their enduring love for you. I alone have come, all amazed and fearful, from the net wherein they were taken, but I find my life more bitter than my comrades found the grave. I see you on your goings and comings about the house. I may speak with you both matins and vespers. But no other joy do I get—neither clasp nor kiss, nothing but a few empty, courteous words. Since all these evils are come upon me because of you, I choose death rather than life. For this reason your Lay should bear my name, and be called the Lay of the Dolorous Knight. He who would name it the Lay of the Four Sorrows would name it wrongly, and not according to the truth."

"By my faith," replied the lady, "this is a fair saying. So shall the song be known as the Lay of the Dolorous Knight."

Thus was the Lay conceived, made perfect, and brought to a fair birth. For this reason it came by its name; though to this day some call it the Lay of the Four Sorrows. Either name befits it well, for the story tells of both these matters, but it is the use and wont in this land to call it the Lay of the Dolorous Knight. Here it ends; no more is there to say. I heard no more, and nothing more I know. Perforce I bring my story to a close.

THE LAY OF ELIDUC

Now will I rehearse before you a very ancient Breton Lay. As the tale was told to me, so, in turn, will I tell it over again, to the best of my art and knowledge. Hearken now to my story, its why and its reason.

In Brittany there lived a knight, so courteous and so brave, that in all the realm there was no worthier lord than he. This knight was named Eliduc. He had wedded in his youth a noble lady of proud race and name. They had long dwelt together in peace and content, for their hearts were fixed on one another in faith and loyalty. Now it chanced that Eliduc sought his fortune in a far land, where there was a great war. There he loved a Princess, the daughter of the King and Queen of those parts. Guillardun was the maiden's name, and in all the realm was none more fair. The wife of Eliduc had to name, Guildeleuc, in her own country. By reason of these two ladies their story is known as the Lay of Guildeleuc and Guillardun, but at first it was rightly called the Lay of Eliduc. The name is a little matter; but if you hearken to me you shall learn the story of these three lovers, in its pity and its truth.

Eliduc had as lord and suzerain, the King of Brittany over Sea. The knight was greatly loved and cherished of his prince, by reason of his long and loyal service. When the King's business took him from his realm, Eliduc was his master's Justice and Seneschal. He governed the country well and wisely, and held it from the foe with a strong hand. Nevertheless, in spite of all, much evil was appointed unto him. Eliduc was a mighty hunter, and by the King's grace, he would chase the stag within the woods. He was cunning and fair as Tristan, and so wise in venery, that the oldest forster might not gainsay him in aught concerning the shaw. But by reason of malice and envy, certain men accused him to the King that he had meddled with the royal pleasure. The King bade Eliduc to avoid his Court. He gave no reason for his commandment, and the knight might learn nothing of the cause. Often he prayed the King that he might know whereof he was accused. Often he begged his lord not to heed the specious and crafty words of his foes. He called to mind the wounds he had gained in his master's wars, but was answered never a word. When Eliduc found that he might get no speech with his lord, it became his honour to depart. He returned to his house, and calling his friends around him, opened out to them this business of the King's wrath, in recompense for his faithful service.

"I did not reckon on a King's gratitude; but as the proverb says, it is useless for a farmer to dispute with the horse in his plough. The wise and virtuous man keeps faith to his lord, and bears goodwill to his neighbour, not for what he may receive in return."

Then the knight told his friends that since he might no longer stay in his own country, he should cross the sea to the realm of Logres, and sojourn there awhile, for his solace. His fief he placed in the hands of his wife, and he required of his men, and of all who held him dear, that they would serve her loyally. Having given good counsel to the utmost of his power, the knight prepared him for the road. Right heavy were his friends and kin, that he must go forth from amongst them.

Eliduc took with him ten knights of his household, and set out on his journey. His dame came with him so far as she was able, wringing her hands, and making much sorrow, at the departure of her husband. At the end he pledged good faith to her, as she to him, and so she returned to her own home. Eliduc went his way, till he came to a haven on the sea. He took ship, and sailed to the realm of Tosenois, for many kings dwell in that country, and ever there were strife and war. Now, near to Exeter, in this land, there dwelt a King, right rich and strong, but old and very full of years. He had no son of his body, but one maid only, young, and of an age to wed. Since he would not bestow this damsel on a certain prince of his neighbours, this lord made mortal war upon his fellow, spoiling and wasting all his land. The ancient King, for surety, had set his daughter within a castle, fair and very strong. He had charged the sergeants not to issue forth from the gates, and for the rest there was none so bold as to seek to storm the keep, or even to joust about the barriers. When Eliduc was told of this quarrel, he needed to go no farther, and sojourned for awhile in the land. He turned over in his mind which of these princes dealt unjustly with his neighbour. Since he deemed that the aged king was the more vexed and sorely pressed in the matter, he resolved to aid him to the best of his might, and to take arms in his service. Eliduc, therefore, wrote letters to the King, telling him that he had quitted his own country, and sought refuge in the King's realm. For his part he was willing to fight as a mercenary in the King's quarrel, and if a safe conduct were given him, he and the knights of his company would ride, forthwith, to their master's aid. This letter, Eliduc sent by the hands of his squires to the King. When the ancient lord had read the letter, he rejoiced greatly, and made much of the messengers. He summoned his constable, and commanded him swiftly to write out the safe conduct, that would bring the baron to his side. For the rest he bade that the messengers meetly should be lodged and apparelled, and that such money should be given them as would be sufficient to their needs. Then he sealed the safe conduct with his royal seal, and sent it to Eliduc, straightway, by a sure hand.

When Eliduc came in answer to the summons, he was received with great honour by the King. His lodging was appointed in the house of a grave and courteous burgess of the city, who bestowed the fairest chamber on his guest. Eliduc fared softly, both at bed and board. He called to his table such good knights as were in misaise, by reason of prison or of war. He charged his men that none should be so bold as to take pelf or penny from the citizens of the town, during the first forty days of their sojourn. But on the third day, it was bruited about the streets, that the enemy were near at hand. The country folk deemed that they approached to invest the city, and to take the gates by storm. When the noise and clamour of the fearful burgesses came to the ears of Eliduc, he and his company donned their harness, and got to horse, as quickly as they might. Forty horsemen mounted with him; as to the rest, many lay sick or hurt within the city, and others were captives in the hands of the foe. These forty stout sergeants waited for no sounding of trumpets; they hastened to seek their captain at his lodging, and rode at his back through the city gate.

"Sir," said they, "where you go, there we will follow, and what you bid us, that shall we do."

"Friends," made answer the knight, "I thank you for your fellowship. There is no man amongst us but who wishes to molest the foe, and do them all the mischief that he is able. If we await them in the town, we defend ourselves with the shield, and not with the sword. To my mind it is better to fall in the field than to

hide behind walls; but if any of you have a wiser counsel to offer, now let him speak."

"Sir," replied a soldier of the company, "through the wood, in good faith, there runs a path, right strict and narrow. It is the wont of the enemy to approach our city by this track. After their deeds of arms before the walls, it is their custom to return by the way they came, helmet on saddle bow, and hauberk unbraced. If we might catch them, unready in the path, we could trouble them very grievously, even though it be at the peril of our lives."

"Friends," answered Eliduc, "you are all the King's men, and are bound to serve him faithfully, even to the death. Come, now, with me where I will go, and do that thing which you shall see me do. I give you my word as a loyal gentleman, that no harm shall hap to any. If we gain spoil and riches from the foe, each shall have his lot in the ransom. At the least we may do them much hurt and mischief in this quarrel."

Eliduc set his men in ambush, near by that path, within the wood. He told over to them, like a cunning captain, the crafty plan he had devised, and taught them how to play their parts, and to call upon his name. When the foe had entered on that perilous path, and were altogether taken in the snare, Eliduc cried his name, and summoned his companions to bear themselves like men. This they did stoutly, and assailed their enemy so fiercely that he was dismayed beyond measure, and his line being broken, fled to the forest. In this fight was the constable taken, together with fifty and five other lords, who owned themselves prisoners, and were given to the keeping of the squires. Great was the spoil in horse and harness, and marvellous was the wealth they gained in gold and ransom. So having done such great deeds in so short a space, they returned to the city, joyous and content.

The King looked forth from a tower. He feared grievously for his men, and made his complaint of Eliduc, who—he deemed—had betrayed him in his need. Upon the road he saw a great company, charged and laden with spoil. Since the number of those who returned was more than those who went forth, the king knew not again his own. He came down from the tower, in doubt and sore trouble, bidding that the gates should be made fast, and that men should mount upon the walls. For such coil as this, there was slender warrant. A squire who was sent out, came back with all speed, and showed him of this adventure. He told over the story of the ambush, and the tale of the prisoners. He rehearsed how the constable was taken, and that many a knight was wounded, and many a brave man slain. When the King might give credence thereto, he had more joy than ever king before. He got him from his tower, and going before Eliduc, he praised him to his face, and rendered him the captives as a gift. Eliduc gave the King's bounty to his men. He bestowed on them besides, all the harness and the spoil; keeping, for his part, but three knights, who had won much honour in the battle. From this day the King loved and cherished Eliduc very dearly. He held the knight, and his company, for a full year in his service, and at the end of the year, such faith had he in the knight's loyalty, that he appointed him Seneschal and Constable of his realm.

Eliduc was not only a brave and wary captain; he was also a courteous gentleman, right goodly to behold.

That fair maiden, the daughter of the King, heard tell of his deeds, and desired to see his face, because of the good men spake of him. She sent her privy chamberlain to the knight, praying him to come to her house, that she might solace herself with the story of his deeds, for greatly she wondered that he had no care for her friendship. Eliduc gave answer to the chamberlain that he would ride forthwith, since much he desired to meet so high a dame. He bade his squire to saddle his destrier, and rode to the palace, to have speech with the lady. Eliduc stood without the lady's chamber, and prayed the chamberlain to tell the dame that he had come, according to her wish. The chamberlain came forth with a smiling face, and straightway led him in the chamber. When the princess saw the knight, she cherished him very sweetly, and welcomed him in the most honourable fashion. The knight gazed upon the lady, who was passing fair to see. He thanked her courteously, that she was pleased to permit him to have speech with so high a princess. Guillardun took Eliduc by the hand, and seated him upon the bed, near her side. They spake together of many things,

for each found much to say. The maiden looked closely upon the knight, his face and semblance; to her heart she said that never before had she beheld so comely a man. Her eyes might find no blemish in his person, and Love knocked upon her heart, requiring her to love, since her time had come. She sighed, and her face lost its fair colour; but she cared only to hide her trouble from the knight, lest he should think her the less maidenly therefore. When they had talked together for a great space, Eliduc took his leave, and went his way. The lady would have kept him longer gladly, but since she did not dare, she allowed him to depart. Eliduc returned to his lodging, very pensive and deep in thought. He called to mind that fair maiden, the daughter of his King, who so sweetly had bidden him to her side, and had kissed him farewell, with sighs that were sweeter still. He repented him right earnestly that he had lived so long a while in the land without seeking her face, but promised that often he would enter her palace now. Then he remembered the wife whom he had left in his own house. He recalled the parting between them, and the covenant he made, that good faith and stainless honour should be ever betwixt the twain. But the maiden, from whom he came, was willing to take him as her knight! If such was her will, might any pluck him from her hand?

All night long, that fair maiden, the daughter of the King, had neither rest nor sleep. She rose up, very early in the morning, and commanding her chamberlain, opened out to him all that was in her heart. She leaned her brow against the casement.

"By my faith," she said, "I am fallen into a deep ditch, and sorrow has come upon me. I love Eliduc, the good knight, whom my father made his Seneschal. I love him so dearly that I turn the whole night upon my bed, and cannot close my eyes, nor sleep. If he assured me of his heart, and loved me again, all my pleasure should be found in his happiness. Great might be his profit, for he would become King of this realm, and little enough is it for his deserts, so courteous is he and wise. If he have nothing better than friendship to give me, I choose death before life, so deep is my distress."

When the princess had spoken what it pleased her to say, the chamberlain, whom she had bidden, gave her loyal counsel.

"Lady," said he, "since you have set your love upon this knight, send him now—if so it please you—some goodly gift-girdle or scarf or ring. If he receive the gift with delight, rejoicing in your favour, you may be assured that he loves you. There is no Emperor, under Heaven, if he were tendered your tenderness, but would go the more lightly for your grace."

The damsel hearkened to the counsel of her chamberlain, and made reply, "If only I knew that he desired my love! Did ever maiden woo her knight before, by asking whether he loved or hated her? What if he make of me a mock and a jest in the ears of his friends! Ah, if the secrets of the heart were but written on the face! But get you ready, for go you must, at once."

"Lady," answered the chamberlain, "I am ready to do your bidding."

"You must greet the knight a hundred times in my name, and will place my girdle in his hand, and this my golden ring."

When the chamberlain had gone upon his errand, the maiden was so sick at heart, that for a little she would have bidden him return. Nevertheless, she let him go his way, and eased her shame with words.

"Alas, what has come upon me, that I should put my heart upon a stranger. I know nothing of his folk, whether they be mean or high; nor do I know whether he will part as swiftly as he came. I have done foolishly, and am worthy of blame, since I have bestowed my love very lightly. I spoke to him yesterday for the first time, and now I pray him for his love. Doubtless he will make me a song! Yet if he be the courteous gentleman I believe him, he will understand, and not deal hardly with me. At least the dice are cast, and if he may not love me, I shall know myself the most woeful of ladies, and never taste of joy all the days of my life."

Whilst the maiden lamented in this fashion, the chamberlain hastened to the lodging of Eliduc. He came before the knight, and having saluted him in his lady's name, he gave to his hand the ring and the girdle. The knight thanked him earnestly for the gifts. He placed the ring upon his finger, and the girdle he girt about his

body. He said no more to the chamberlain, nor asked him any questions; save only that he proffered him a gift. This the messenger might not have, and returned the way he came. The chamberlain entered in the palace and found the princess within her chamber. He greeted her on the part of the knight, and thanked her for her bounty.

"Diva, diva," cried the lady hastily, "hide nothing from me; does he love me, or does he not?"

"Lady," answered the chamberlain, "as I deem, he loves you, and truly. Eliduc is no cozeners with words. I hold him for a discreet and prudent gentleman, who knows well how to hide what is in his heart. I gave him greeting in your name, and granted him your gifts. He set the ring upon his finger, and as to your girdle, he girt it upon him, and belted it tightly about his middle. I said no more to him, nor he to me; but if he received not your gifts in tenderness, I am the more deceived. Lady, I have told you his words: I cannot tell you his thoughts. Only, mark carefully what I am about to say. If Eliduc had not a richer gift to offer, he would not have taken your presents at my hand."

"It pleases you to jest," said the lady. "I know well that Eliduc does not altogether hate me. Since my only fault is to cherish him too fondly, should he hate me, he would indeed be blameworthy. Never again by you, or by any other, will I require him of aught, or look to him for comfort. He shall see that a maiden's love is no slight thing, lightly given, and lightly taken again—but, perchance, he will not dwell in the realm so long as to know of the matter."

"Lady, the knight has covenanted to serve the King, in all loyalty, for the space of a year. You have full leisure to tell, whatever you desire him to learn."

When the maiden heard that Eliduc remained in the country, she rejoiced very greatly. She was glad that the knight would sojourn awhile in her city, for she knew naught of the torment he endured, since first he looked upon her. He had neither peace nor delight, for he could not get her from his mind. He reproached himself bitterly. He called to remembrance the covenant he made with his wife, when he departed from his own land, that he would never be false to his oath. But his heart was a captive now, in a very strong prison. He desired greatly to be loyal and honest, but he could not deny his love for the maiden—Guillardun, so frank and so fair.

Eliduc strove to act as his honour required. He had speech and sight of the lady, and did not refuse her kiss and embrace. He never spoke of love, and was diligent to offend in nothing. He was careful in this, because he would keep faith with his wife, and would attempt no matter against his King. Very grievously he pained himself, but at the end he might do no more. Eliduc caused his horse to be saddled, and calling his companions about him, rode to the castle to get audience of the King. He considered, too, that he might see his lady, and learn what was in her heart. It was the hour of meat, and the King having risen from table, had entered in his daughter's chamber. The King was at chess, with a lord who had but come from over-sea. The lady sat near the board, to watch the movements of the game. When Eliduc came before the prince, he welcomed him gladly, bidding him to seat himself close at hand. Afterwards he turned to his daughter, and said, "Princess, it becomes you to have a closer friendship with this lord, and to treat him well and worshipfully. Amongst five hundred, there is no better knight than he."

When the maiden had listened demurely to her father's commandment, there was no gayer lady than she. She rose lightly to her feet, and taking the knight a little from the others, seated him at her side. They remained silent, because of the greatness of their love. She did not dare to speak the first, and to him the maid was more dreadful than a knight in mail. At the end Eliduc thanked her courteously for the gifts she had sent him; never was grace so precious and so kind. The maiden made answer to the knight, that very dear to her was the use he had found for her ring, and the girdle with which he had belted his body. She loved him so fondly that she wished him for her husband. If she might not have her wish, one thing she knew well, that she would take no living man, but would die unwed. She trusted he would not deny her hope.

"Lady," answered the knight, "I have great joy in your love, and thank you humbly for the goodwill you bear me. I ought indeed

to be a happy man, since you deign to show me at what price you value our friendship. Have you remembered that I may not remain always in your realm? I covenanted with the King to serve him as his man for the space of one year. Perchance I may stay longer in his service, for I would not leave him till his quarrel be ended. Then I shall return to my own land; so, fair lady, you permit me to say farewell."

The maiden made answer to her knight, "Fair friend, right sweetly I thank you for your courteous speech. So apt a clerk will know, without more words, that he may have of me just what he would. It becomes my love to give faith to all you say."

The two lovers spoke together no further; each was well assured of what was in the other's heart. Eliduc rode back to his lodging, right joyous and content. Often he had speech with his friend, and passing great was the love which grew between the twain.

Eliduc pressed on the war so fiercely that in the end he took captive the King who troubled his lord, and had delivered the land from its foes. He was greatly praised of all as a crafty captain in the field, and a hardy comrade with the spear. The poor and the minstrel counted him a generous knight. About this time that King, who had bidden Eliduc avoid his realm, sought diligently to find him. He had sent three messengers beyond the seas to seek his ancient Seneschal. A strong enemy had wrought him much grief and loss. All his castles were taken from him, and all his country was a spoil to the foe. Often and sorely he repented him of the evil counsel to which he had given ear. He mourned the absence of his mightiest knight, and drove from his councils those false lords who, for malice and envy, had defamed him. These he outlawed for ever from his realm. The King wrote letters to Eliduc, conjuring him by the loving friendship that was once between them, and summoning him as a vassal is required of his lord, to hasten to his aid, in that his bitter need. When Eliduc heard these tidings they pressed heavily upon him, by reason of the grievous love he bore the dame. She, too, loved him with a woman's whole heart. Between the two there was nothing but the purest love and tenderness. Never by word or deed had they spoiled their friendship. To speak a little closely together; to give some fond and foolish gift; this was the sum of their love. In her wish and hope the maiden trusted to hold the knight in her land, and to have him as her lord. Naught she deemed that he was wedded to a wife beyond the sea.

"Alas," said Eliduc, "I have loitered too long in this country, and have gone astray. Here I have set my heart on a maiden, Guillardun, the daughter of the King, and she, on me. If, now, we part, there is no help that one, or both, of us, must die. Yet go I must. My lord requires me by letters, and by the oath of fealty that I have sworn. My own honour demands that I should return to my wife. I dare not stay; needs must I go. I cannot wed my lady, for not a priest in Christendom would make us man and wife. All things turn to blame. God, what a tearing asunder will our parting be! Yet there is one who will ever think me in the right, though I be held in scorn of all. I will be guided by her wishes, and what she counsels that will I do. The King, her sire, is troubled no longer by any war. First, I will go to him, praying that I may return to my own land, for a little, because of the need of my rightful lord. Then I will seek out the maiden, and show her the whole business. She will tell me her desire, and I shall act according to her wish."

The knight hesitated no longer as to the path he should follow. He went straight to the King, and craved leave to depart. He told him the story of his lord's distress, and read, and placed in the King's hands, the letters calling him back to his home. When the King had read the writing, and knew that Eliduc purposed to depart, he was passing sad and heavy. He offered the knight the third part of his kingdom, with all the treasure that he pleased to ask, if he would remain at his side. He offered these things to the knight—these, and the gratitude of all his days besides.

"Do not tempt me, sire," replied the knight. "My lord is in such deadly peril, and his letters have come so great a way to require me, that go I must to aid him in his need. When I have ended my task, I will return very gladly, if you care for my services, and with me a goodly company of knights to fight in your quarrels."

The King thanked Eliduc for his words, and granted him graciously the leave that he demanded. He gave him, moreover, all the goods of his house; gold and silver, hound and horses, silken cloths, both rich and fair, these he might have at his will. Eliduc took of them discreetly, according to his need. Then, very softly, he asked one other gift. If it pleased the King, right willingly would he say farewell to the princess, before he went. The King replied that it was his pleasure, too. He sent a page to open the door of the maiden's chamber, and to tell her the knight's request. When she saw him, she took him by the hand, and saluted him very sweetly. Eliduc was the more fain of counsel than of claspings. He seated himself by the maiden's side, and as shortly as he might, commenced to show her of the business. He had done no more than read her of his letters, than her face lost its fair colour, and near she came to swoon. When Eliduc saw her about to fall, he knew not what he did, for grief. He kissed her mouth, once and again, and wept above her, very tenderly. He took, and held her fast in his arms, till she had returned from her swoon.

"Fair dear friend," said he softly, "bear with me while I tell you that you are my life and my death, and in you is all my comfort. I have bidden farewell to your father, and purposed to go back to my own land, for reason of this bitter business of my lord. But my will is only in your pleasure, and whatever the future brings me, your counsel I will do."

"Since you cannot stay," said the maiden, "take me with you, wherever you go. If not, my life is so joyless without you, that I would wish to end it with my knife."

Very sweetly made answer Sir Eliduc, for in honesty he loved honest maid, "Fair friend, I have sworn faith to your father, and am his man. If I carried you with me, I should give the lie to my troth. Let this covenant be made between us. Should you give me leave to return to my own land I swear to you on my honour as a knight, that I will come again on any day that you shall name. My life is in your hands. Nothing on earth shall keep me from your side, so only that I have life and health."

Then she, who loved so fondly, granted her knight permission to depart, and fixed the term, and named the day for his return. Great was their sorrow that the hour had come to bid farewell. They gave rings of gold for remembrance, and sweetly kissed adieu. So they severed from each other's arms.

Eliduc sought the sea, and with a fair wind, crossed swiftly to the other side. His lord was greatly content to learn the tidings of his knight's return. His friends and his kinsfolk came to greet him, and the common folk welcomed him very gladly. But, amongst them all, none was so blithe at his home-coming as the fair and prudent lady who was his wife. Despite this show of friendship, Eliduc was ever sad, and deep in thought. He went heavily, till he might look upon his friend. He felt no happiness, nor made pretence of any, till he should meet with her again. His wife was sick at heart, because of the coldness of her husband. She took counsel with her soul, as to what she had done amiss. Often she asked him privily, if she had come short or offended in any measure, whilst he was without the realm. If she was accused by any, let him tell her the accusation, that she might purge herself of the offence.

"Wife," answered Eliduc, "neither I, nor any other, charge you with aught that is against your honour to do. The cause of my sorrow is in myself. I have pledged my faith to the King of that country, from whence I come, that I will return to help him in his need. When my lord the King has peace in his realm, within eight days I shall be once more upon the sea. Great travail I must endure, and many pains I shall suffer, in readiness for that hour. Return I must, and till then I have no mind for anything but toil; for I will not give the lie to my plighted word."

Eliduc put his fief once more in the hands of his dame. He sought his lord, and aided him to the best of his might. By the counsel and prowess of the knight, the King came again into his own. When the term appointed by his lady, and the day she named for his return drew near, Eliduc wrought in such fashion that peace was accorded between the foes. Then the knight made him ready for his journey, and took thought to the folk he should carry with him. His choice fell on two of his nephews, whom he loved very dearly, and on a certain chamberlain of his household. These were trusted servitors, who were of his inmost mind, and knew much

of his counsel. Together with these went his squires, these only, for Eliduc had no care to take many. All these, nephew and squire and chamberlain, Eliduc made to promise, and confirm by an oath, that they would reveal nothing of his business.

The company put to sea without further tarrying, and, crossing quickly, came to that land where Eliduc so greatly desired to be. The knight sought a hostel some distance from the haven, for he would not be seen of any, nor have it bruited that Eliduc was returned. He called his chamberlain, and sent him to his friend, bearing letters that her knight had come, according to the covenant that had been made. At nightfall, before the gates were made fast, Eliduc issued forth from the city, and followed after his messenger. He had clothed himself in mean apparel, and rode at a footpace straight to the city, where dwelt the daughter of the King. The chamberlain arrived before the palace, and by dint of asking and prying, found himself within the lady's chamber. He saluted the maiden, and told her that her lover was near. When Guillardun heard these tidings she was astonied beyond measure, and for joy and pity wept right tenderly. She kissed the letters of her friend, and the messenger who brought such welcome tidings. The chamberlain prayed the lady to attire and make her ready to join her friend. The day was spent in preparing for the adventure, according to such plan as had been devised. When dark was come, and all was still, the damsel stole forth from the palace, and the chamberlain with her. For fear that any man should know her again, the maiden had hidden, beneath a riding cloak, her silken gown, embroidered with gold. About the space of a bow shot from the city gate, there was a coppice standing within a fair meadow. Near by this wood, Eliduc and his comrades awaited the coming of Guillardun. When Eliduc saw the lady, wrapped in her mantle, and his chamberlain leading her by the hand, he got from his horse, and kissed her right tenderly. Great joy had his companions at so fair a sight. He set her on the horse, and climbing before her, took bridle in glove, and returned to the haven, with all the speed he might. He entered forthwith in the ship, which put to sea, having on board none, save Eliduc, his men, and his lady, Guillardun. With a fair wind, and a quiet hour, the sailors thought that they would swiftly come to shore. But when their journey was near its end, a sudden tempest arose on the sea. A mighty wind drove them far from their harbourage, so that their rudder was broken, and their sail torn from the mast. Devoutly they cried on St. Nicholas, St. Clement, and Madame St. Mary, to aid them in this peril. They implored the Mother that she would approach her Son, not to permit them to perish, but to bring them to the harbour where they would come. Without sail or oar, the ship drifted here and there, at the mercy of the storm. They were very close to death, when one of the company, with a loud voice began to cry, "What need is there of prayers! Sir, you have with you, her, who brings us to our death. We shall never win to land, because you, who already have a faithful wife, seek to wed this foreign woman, against God and His law, against honour and your plighted troth. Grant us to cast her in the sea, and straightway the winds and the waves will be still."

When Eliduc heard these words he was like to come to harm for rage.

"Bad servant and felon traitor," he cried, "you should pay dearly for your speech, if I might leave my lady."

Eliduc held his friend fast in his arms, and cherished her as well as he was able. When the lady heard that her knight was already wedded in his own realm, she swooned where she lay. Her face became pale and discoloured; she neither breathed nor sighed, nor could any bring her any comfort. Those who carried her to a sheltered place, were persuaded that she was but dead, because of the fury of the storm. Eliduc was passing heavy. He rose to his feet, and hastening to his squire, smote him so grievously with an oar, that he fell senseless on the deck. He haled him by his legs to the side of the ship and flung the body in the sea, where it was swiftly swallowed by the waves. He went to the broken rudder, and governed the nave so skilfully, that it presently drew to land. So, having come to their fair haven, they cast anchor, and made fast their bridge to the shore. Dame Guillardun lay yet in her swoon, and seemed no other than if she were really dead. Eliduc's sorrow was all the more, since he deemed that he had slain her

with his hand. He inquired of his companions in what near place they might lay the lady to her rest, "for I will not bid her farewell, till she is put in holy ground with such pomp and rite as befit the obsequies of the daughter of a King." His comrades answered him never a word, for they were all bemused by reason of what had befallen. Eliduc, therefore, considered within himself to what place he should carry the lady. His own home was so near the haven where he had come, that very easily they could ride there before evening. He called to mind that in his realm there was a certain great forest, both long and deep. Within this wood there was a little chapel, served by a holy hermit for forty years, with whom Eliduc had oftentimes spoken.

"To this holy man," he said, "I will bear my lady. In his chapel he shall bury her sweet body. I will endow him so richly of my lands, that upon her chantry shall be founded a mighty abbey. There some convent of monks or nuns or canons shall ever hold her in remembrance, praying God to grant her mercy in His day."

Eliduc got to horse, but first took oath of his comrades that never, by them, should be discovered, that which they should see. He set his friend before him on the palfrey, and thus the living and the dead rode together, till they had entered the wood, and come before the chapel. The squires called and beat upon the door, but it remained fast, and none was found to give them any answer. Eliduc bade that one should climb through a window, and open the door from within. When they had come within the chapel they found a new made tomb, and writ thereon, that the holy hermit having finished his course, was made perfect, eight days before. Passing sad was Eliduc, and esmayed. His companions would have digged a second grave, and set therein, his friend; but the knight would in no wise consent, for—he said—he purposed to take counsel of the priests of his country, as to building some church or abbey above her tomb. "At this hour we will but lay her body before the altar, and commend her to God His holy keeping." He commanded them to bring their mantles and make a bed upon the altar-pace. Thereon they laid the maiden, and having wrapped her close in her lover's cloak, left her alone. When the moment came for Eliduc to take farewell of his lady, he deemed that his own last hour had come. He kissed her eyes and her face.

"Fair friend," said he, "if it be pleasing to God, never will I bear sword or lance again, or seek the pleasures of this mortal world. Fair friend, in an ill hour you saw me! Sweet lady, in a bitter hour you followed me to death! Fairest, now were you a queen, were it not for the pure and loyal love you set upon me? Passing sad of heart am I for you, my friend. The hour that I have seen you in your shroud, I will take the habit of some holy order, and every day, upon your tomb, I will tell over the chaplet of my sorrow."

Having taken farewell of the maiden, Eliduc came forth from the chapel, and closed the doors. He sent messages to his wife, that he was returning to his house, but weary and overborne. When the dame heard these tidings, she was happy in her heart, and made ready to greet him. She received her lord tenderly; but little joy came of her welcome, for she got neither smiles in answer, nor tender words in return. She dared not inquire the reason, during the two days Eliduc remained in the house. The knight heard Mass very early in the morning, and then set forth on the road leading to the chapel where the maiden lay. He found her as he had parted, for she had not come back from her swoon, and there was neither stir in her, nor breath. He marvelled greatly, for he saw her, vermeil and white, as he had known her in life. She had lost none of her sweet colour, save that she was a little blanched. He wept bitterly above her, and entreated for her soul. Having made his prayer, he went again to his house.

On a day when Eliduc went forth, his wife called to her a varlet of her household, commanding him to follow his lord afar off, and mark where he went, and on what business. She promised to give him harness and horses, if he did according to her will. The varlet hid himself in the wood, and followed so cunningly after his lord, that he was not perceived. He watched the knight enter the chapel, and heard the cry and lamentation that he made. When Eliduc came out, the varlet hastened to his mistress, and told her what he had seen, the tears and dolour, and all that befell his lord within the hermitage. The lady summoned all her courage.

"We will go together, as soon as we may, to this hermitage. My lord tells me that he rides presently to the Court to speak with the King. I knew that my husband loved this dead hermit very tenderly, but I little thought that his loss would make him mad with grief."

The next day the dame let her lord go forth in peace. When, about noon, Eliduc rode to the Court to greet his King, the lady rose quickly, and carrying the varlet with her, went swiftly to the hermitage. She entered the chapel, and saw the bed upon the altarpiece, and the maiden thereon, like a new sprung rose. Stooping down the lady removed the mantle. She marked the rigid body, the long arms, and the frail white hands, with their slender fingers, folded on the breast. Thus she learned the secret of the sorrow of her lord. She called the varlet within the chapel, and showed him this wonder.

"Seest thou," she said, "this woman, who for beauty shineth as a gem! This lady, in her life, was the lover of my lord. It was for her that all his days were spoiled by grief. By my faith I marvel little at his sorrow, since I, who am a woman too, will—for pity's sake or love—never know joy again, having seen so fair a lady in the dust."

So the wife wept above the body of the maiden. Whilst the lady sat weeping, a weasel came from under the altar, and ran across Guillardun's body. The varlet smote it with his staff, and killed it as it passed. He took the vermin and flung it away. The companion of this weasel presently came forth to seek him. She ran to the place where he lay, and finding that he would not get him on his feet, seemed as one distraught. She went forth from the chapel, and hastened to the wood, from whence she returned quickly, bearing a vermeil flower beneath her teeth. This red flower she placed within the mouth of that weasel the varlet had slain, and immediately he stood upon his feet. When the lady saw this, she cried to the varlet,

"Throw, man, throw, and gain the flower."

The servitor flung his staff, and the weasels fled away, leaving that fair flower upon the floor. The lady rose. She took the flower, and returned with it swiftly to the altar pace. Within the mouth of the maiden, she set a flower that was more vermeil still. For a short space the dame and the damsel were alike breathless. Then the maiden came to herself, with a sigh. She opened her eyes, and commenced to speak.

"Diva," she said, "have I slept so long, indeed!"

When the lady heard her voice she gave thanks to God. She inquired of the maiden as to her name and degree. The damsel made answer to her, "Lady, I was born in Logres, and am daughter to the King of that realm. Greatly there I loved a knight, named Eliduc, the seneschal of my sire. We fled together from my home, to my own most grievous fault. He never told me that he was wedded to a wife in his own country, and he hid the matter so cunningly, that I knew naught thereof. When I heard tell of his dame, I swooned for pure sorrow. Now I find that this false lover, has, like a felon, betrayed me in a strange land. What will chance to a maiden in so foul a plight? Great is that woman's folly who puts her trust in man."

"Fair damsel," replied the lady, "there is nothing in the whole world that can give such joy to this felon, as to hear that you are yet alive. He deems that you are dead, and every day he beweeeps your swoon in the chapel. I am his wife, and my heart is sick, just for looking on his sorrow. To learn the reason of his grief, I caused him to be followed, and that is why I have found you here. It is a great happiness for me to know that you live. You shall return with me to my home, and I will place you in the tenderness of your friend. Then I shall release him of his marriage troth, since it is my dearest hope to take the veil."

When the wife had comforted the maiden with such words, they went together to her own house. She called to her servitor, and bade him seek his lord. The varlet went here and there, till he lighted on Eliduc. He came before him, and showed him of all these things. Eliduc mounted straightway on his horse, and waiting neither for squire or companion, that same night came to his hall. When he found alive, her, who once was dead, Eliduc thanked his wife for so dear a gift. He rejoiced beyond measure, and of all his days, no day was more happy than this. He kissed

the maiden often, and very sweetly she gave him again his kiss, for great was the joy between the twain. The dame looked on their happiness, and knew that her lord meetly had bestowed his love. She prayed him, therefore, that he would grant her leave to depart, since she would serve God as a cloistered nun. Of his wealth she craved such a portion as would permit her to found a convent. He would then be able to wed the maiden on whom his heart was set, for it was neither honest nor seemly that a man should maintain a wife with either hand.

Eliduc could do no otherwise than consent. He gave the permission she asked, and did all according to her will. He endowed the lady of his lands, near by that chapel and hermitage, within the wood. There he built a church with offices and refectory, fair to see. Much wealth he bestowed on the convent, in money and estate. When all was brought to a good end, the lady took the veil upon her head. Thirty other ladies entered in the house with her, and long she ruled them as their Abbess, right wisely and well.

Eliduc wedded with his friend, in great pomp, and passing rich was the marriage feast. They dwelt in unity together for many days, for ever between them was perfect love. They walked uprightly, and gave alms of their goods, till such a time as it became them to turn to God. After much thought, Eliduc built a great church close beside his castle. He endowed it with all his gold and silver, and with the rest of his land. He set priests there, and holy layfolk also, for the business of the house, and the fair services of religion.

When all was builded and ordered, Eliduc offered himself, with them, that he—weak man—might serve the omnipotent God. He set with the Abbess Guildeluec—who once was his dame—that wife whom he loved so dearly well. The Abbess received her as a sister, and welcomed her right honourably. She admonished her in the offices of God, and taught her of the rules and practice of their holy Order. They prayed to God for their friend, that He would grant him mercy in His day. In turn, he entreated God for them. Messages came from convent and monastery as to how they fared, so that each might encourage the other in His way. Each strove painfully, for himself and his, to love God the more dearly, and to abide in His holy faith. Each made a good end, and the mercy of God was abundantly made clear to all.

Of the adventure of these three lovers, the courteous Bretons made this Lay for remembrance, since they deemed it a matter that men should not forget.

THE LAY OF THE NIGHTINGALE

Now will I tell you a story, whereof the Breton harper already has made a Lay. Laustic, I deem, men name it in that country, which, being interpreted, means rossignol in French, and nightingale in good plain English.

In the realm of Brittany stands a certain rich and mighty city, called Saint Malo. There were citizens of this township two knights, so well spoken and reputed of all, that the city drew therefrom great profit and fame. The houses of these lords were very near the one to the other. One of the two knights had to wife a passing fair lady, right gracious of manner and sweet of tongue. Wondrous pleasure found this dame to array herself richly, after the wont and fashion of her time. The other knight was yet a bachelor. He was well accounted of amongst his fellows as a hardy knight and as an honourable man. He gave hospitality gladly. Largely he gained, largely he spent, and willingly bestowed gifts of all that he had.

This bachelor set his love upon his neighbour's wife. By reason of his urgent prayers, his long suit and service, and by reason that all men spake naught of him but praise—perchance, also, for reason that he was never far from her eye—presently this lady came to set her heart on him again. Though these two friends loved right tenderly, yet were they so private and careful in their loves that none perceived what was in their hearts. No man pried on them, or disturbed their goings and comings. These were the more easy to devise since the bachelor and the lady were such near neighbours. Their two houses stood side by side, hall and cellar and combles. Only between the gardens was built a high and ancient wall, of worn gray stone. When the lady sat within her bower,

by leaning from the casement she and her friend might speak together, he to her, and she to him. They could also throw messages in writing, and divers pretty gifts, the one to the other. Little enough had they to displease them, and greatly were they at their ease, save only that they might not take their pleasure together, so often as their hearts had wished. For the dame was guarded very straitly when her husband was abroad. Yet not so strictly but that they might have word and speech, the now by night and now by day. At least, however close the watch and ward, none might hinder that at times these fair lovers stood within their casements, and looked fondly on the other's face.

Now after these friends had loved for a great space it chanced that the season became warm and sweet. It was the time when meadow and copse are green; when orchards grow white with bloom, and birds break into song as thickly as the bush to flower. It is the season when he who loves would win to his desire. Truly I tell you that the knight would have done all in his power to attain his wish, and the lady, for her part, yearned for sight and speech of her friend. At night, when the moon shone clearly in the sky, and her lord lay sleeping at her side, often the dame slipped softly from her bed, and hastening to the casement, leaned forth to have sight of him who watched. The greater part of the dark they kept vigil together, for very pleasant it is to look upon your friend, when sweeter things are denied.

This chanced so often, and the lady rose so frequently from her bed, that her lord was altogether wrathful, and many a time inquired the reason of her unrest.

"Husband," replied the dame, "there is no dearer joy in this world, than to hear the nightingale sing. It is to hearken to the song that rises so sweetly on the night, that I lean forth from the casement. What tune of harp or viol is half so fair! Because of my delight in his song, and of my desire to hear, I may not shut my eyes till it be morn."

When the husband heard the lady's words he laughed within himself for wrath and malice. He purposed that very soon the nightingale should sing within a net. So he bade the servants of his house to devise fillets and snares, and to set their cunning traps about the orchard. Not a chestnut tree nor hazel within the garth but was limed and netted for the caging of this bird. It was not long therefore ere the nightingale was taken, and the servants made haste to give him to the pleasure of their lord. Wondrous merry was the knight when he held him living in his hand. He went straightway to the chamber of his dame, and entering, said,

"Wife, are you within? Come near, for I must speak with you. Here is the nightingale, all limed and taken, who made vigil of your sleeping hours. Take now your rest in peace, for he will never disturb you more."

When the lady understood these words she was marvellously sorrowful and heavy. She prayed her lord to grant her the nightingale for a gift. But for all answer he wrung his neck with both hands so fiercely that the head was torn from the body. Then, right foully, he flung the bird upon the knees of the dame, in such fashion that her breast was sprinkled with the blood. So he departed, incontinent, from the chamber in a rage.

The lady took the little body in her hands, and wept his evil fate. She railed on those who with nets and snares had betrayed the nightingale to his death; for anger and hate beyond measure had gained hold on her heart.

"Alas," cried she, "evil is come upon me. Never again may I rise from my bed in the night, and watch from the casement, so that I may see my friend. One thing I know full well, that he will deem my love is no more set upon him. Woe to her who has none to give her counsel. This I will do. I will bestow the nightingale upon him, and send him tidings of the chance that has befallen."

So this doleful lady took a fair piece of white samite, brodered with gold, and wrought thereon the whole story of this adventure. In this silken cloth she wrapped the body of the little bird, and calling to her a trusty servant of her house, charged him with the message, and bade him bear it to her friend. The varlet went his way to the knight, and having saluted him on the part of the lady, he told over to him the story, and bestowed the nightingale upon him. When all had been rehearsed and shown to him, and he had well considered the matter, the knight was very dolent; yet in

no wise would he avenge himself wrongfully. So he caused a certain coffret to be fashioned, made not of iron or steel, but of fine gold and fair stones, most rich and precious, right strongly clasped and bound. In this little chest he set the body of the nightingale, and having sealed the shrine, carried it upon him whenever his business took him abroad.

This adventure could not long be hid. Very swiftly it was noised about the country, and the Breton folk made a Lay thereon, which they called the Lay of the Laustic, in their own tongue.

THE LAY OF SIR LAUNFAL

I will tell you the story of another Lay. It relates the adventures of a rich and mighty baron, and the Breton calls it, the Lay of Sir Launfal.

King Arthur—that fearless knight and courteous lord—removed to Wales, and lodged at Caerleon-on-Usk, since the Picts and Scots did much mischief in the land. For it was the wont of the wild people of the north to enter in the realm of Logres, and burn and damage at their will. At the time of Pentecost, the King cried a great feast. Thereat he gave many rich gifts to his counts and barons, and to the Knights of the Round Table. Never were such worship and bounty shown before at any feast, for Arthur bestowed honours and lands on all his servants—save only on one. This lord, who was forgotten and misliked of the King, was named Launfal. He was beloved by many of the Court, because of his beauty and prowess, for he was a worthy knight, open of heart and heavy of hand. These lords, to whom their comrade was dear, felt little joy to see so stout a knight misprized. Sir Launfal was son to a King of high descent, though his heritage was in a distant land. He was of the King's household, but since Arthur gave him naught, and he was of too proud a mind to pray for his due, he had spent all that he had. Right heavy was Sir Launfal, when he considered these things, for he knew himself taken in the toils. Gentles, marvel not overmuch hereat. Ever must the pilgrim go heavily in a strange land, where there is none to counsel and direct him in the path.

Now, on a day, Sir Launfal got him on his horse, that he might take his pleasure for a little. He came forth from the city, alone, attended by neither servant nor squire. He went his way through a green mead, till he stood by a river of clear running water. Sir Launfal would have crossed this stream, without thought of pass or ford, but he might not do so, for reason that his horse was all fearful and trembling. Seeing that he was hindered in this fashion, Launfal unbitted his steed, and let him pasture in that fair meadow, where they had come. Then he folded his cloak to serve him as a pillow, and lay upon the ground. Launfal lay in great misease, because of his heavy thoughts, and the discomfort of his bed. He turned from side to side, and might not sleep. Now as the knight looked towards the river he saw two damsels coming towards him; fairer maidens Launfal had never seen. These two maidens were richly dressed in kirtles closely laced and shapen to their persons and wore mantles of a goodly purple hue. Sweet and dainty were the damsels, alike in raiment and in face. The elder of these ladies carried in her hands a basin of pure gold, cunningly wrought by some crafty smith—very fair and precious was the cup; and the younger bore a towel of soft white linen. These maidens turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, but went directly to the place where Launfal lay. When Launfal saw that their business was with him, he stood upon his feet, like a discreet and courteous gentleman. After they had greeted the knight, one of the maidens delivered the message with which she was charged.

"Sir Launfal, my demoiselle, as gracious as she is fair, prays that you will follow us, her messengers, as she has a certain word to speak with you. We will lead you swiftly to her pavilion, for our lady is very near at hand. If you but lift your eyes you may see where her tent is spread."

Right glad was the knight to do the bidding of the maidens. He gave no heed to his horse, but left him at his provand in the meadow. All his desire was to go with the damsels, to that pavilion of silk and divers colours, pitched in so fair a place. Certainly neither Semiramis in the days of her most wanton power, nor Octavian, the Emperor of all the West, had so gracious a covering from sun and rain. Above the tent was set an eagle of gold, so

rich and precious, that none might count the cost. The cords and fringes thereof were of silken thread, and the lances which bore aloft the pavilion were of refined gold. No King on earth might have so sweet a shelter, not though he gave in fee the value of his realm. Within this pavilion Launfal came upon the Maiden. Whiter she was than any altar lily, and more sweetly flushed than the new born rose in time of summer heat. She lay upon a bed with napery and coverlet of richer worth than could be furnished by a castle's spoil. Very fresh and slender showed the lady in her vesture of spotless linen. About her person she had drawn a mantle of ermine, edged with purple dye from the vats of Alexandria. By reason of the heat her raiment was unfastened for a little, and her throat and the rondure of her bosom showed whiter and more untouched than hawthorn in May. The knight came before the bed, and stood gazing on so sweet a sight. The Maiden beckoned him to draw near, and when he had seated himself at the foot of her couch, spoke her mind.

"Launfal," she said, "fair friend, it is for you that I have come from my own fair land. I bring you my love. If you are prudent and discreet, as you are goodly to the view, there is no emperor nor count, nor king, whose day shall be so filled with riches and with mirth as yours."

When Launfal heard these words he rejoiced greatly, for his heart was litten by another's torch.

"Fair lady," he answered, "since it pleases you to be so gracious, and to dower so graceless a knight with your love, there is naught that you may bid me do—right or wrong, evil or good—that I will not do to the utmost of my power. I will observe your commandment, and serve in your quarrels. For you I renounce my father and my father's house. This only I pray, that I may dwell with you in your lodging, and that you will never send me from your side."

When the Maiden heard the words of him whom so fondly she desired to love, she was altogether moved, and granted him forthwith her heart and her tenderness. To her bounty she added another gift besides. Never might Launfal be desirous of aught, but he would have according to his wish. He might waste and spend at will and pleasure, but in his purse ever there was to spare. No more was Launfal sad. Right merry was the pilgrim, since one had set him on the way, with such a gift, that the more pennies he bestowed, the more silver and gold were in his pouch.

But the Maiden had yet a word to say.

"Friend," she said, "hearken to my counsel. I lay this charge upon you, and pray you urgently, that you tell not to any man the secret of our love. If you show this matter, you will lose your friend, for ever and a day. Never again may you see my face. Never again will you have seisin of that body, which is now so tender in your eyes."

Launfal plighted faith, that right strictly he would observe this commandment. So the Maiden granted him her kiss and her embrace, and very sweetly in that fair lodging passed the day till evensong was come.

Right loath was Launfal to depart from the pavilion at the vesper hour, and gladly would he have stayed, had he been able, and his lady wished.

"Fair friend," said she, "rise up, for no longer may you tarry. The hour is come that we must part. But one thing I have to say before you go. When you would speak with me I shall hasten to come before your wish. Well I deem that you will only call your friend where she may be found without reproach or shame of men. You may see me at your pleasure; my voice shall speak softly in your ear at will; but I must never be known of your comrades, nor must they ever learn my speech."

Right joyous was Launfal to hear this thing. He sealed the covenant with a kiss, and stood upon his feet. Then there entered the two maidens who had led him to the pavilion, bringing with them rich raiment, fitting for a knight's apparel. When Launfal had clothed himself therewith, there seemed no goodlier varlet under heaven, for certainly he was fair and true. After these maidens had refreshed him with clear water, and dried his hands upon the napkin, Launfal went to meat. His friend sat at table with him, and small will had he to refuse her courtesy. Very serviceably the damsels bore the meats, and Launfal and the Maiden ate and drank

with mirth and content. But one dish was more to the knight's relish than any other. Sweeter than the dainties within his mouth, was the lady's kiss upon his lips.

When supper was ended, Launfal rose from table, for his horse stood waiting without the pavilion. The destrier was newly saddled and bridled, and showed proudly in his rich gay trappings. So Launfal kissed, and bade farewell, and went his way. He rode back towards the city at a slow pace. Often he checked his steed, and looked behind him, for he was filled with amazement, and all bemused concerning this adventure. In his heart he doubted that it was but a dream. He was altogether astonished, and knew not what to do. He feared that pavilion and Maiden alike were from the realm of faery.

Launfal returned to his lodging, and was greeted by servitors, clad no longer in ragged raiment. He fared richly, lay softly, and spent largely, but never knew how his purse was filled. There was no lord who had need of a lodging in the town, but Launfal brought him to his hall, for refreshment and delight. Launfal bestowed rich gifts. Launfal redeemed the poor captive. Launfal clothed in scarlet the minstrel. Launfal gave honour where honour was due. Stranger and friend alike he comforted at need. So, whether by night or by day, Launfal lived greatly at his ease. His lady, she came at will and pleasure, and, for the rest, all was added unto him.

Now it chanced, the same year, about the feast of St. John, a company of knights came, for their solace, to an orchard, beneath that tower where dwelt the Queen. Together with these lords went Gawain and his cousin, Yvain the fair. Then said Gawain, that goodly knight, beloved and dear to all,

"Lords, we do wrong to disport ourselves in this pleasure without our comrade Launfal. It is not well to slight a prince as brave as he is courteous, and of a lineage prouder than our own."

Then certain of the lords returned to the city, and finding Launfal within his hostel, entreated him to take his pastime with them in that fair meadow. The Queen looked out from a window in her tower, she and three ladies of her fellowship. They saw the lords at their pleasure, and Launfal also, whom well they knew. So the Queen chose of her Court thirty damsels—the sweetest of face and most dainty of fashion—and commanded that they should descend with her to take their delight in the garden. When the knights beheld this gay company of ladies come down the steps of the peron, they rejoiced beyond measure. They hastened before to lead them by the hand, and said such words in their ear as were seemly and pleasant to be spoken. Amongst these merry and courteous lords hastened not Sir Launfal. He drew apart from the throng, for with him time went heavily, till he might have clasp and greeting of his friend. The ladies of the Queen's fellowship seemed but kitchen wenches to his sight, in comparison with the loveliness of the maiden. When the Queen marked Launfal go aside, she went his way, and seating herself upon the herb, called the knight before her. Then she opened out her heart.

"Launfal, I have honoured you for long as a worthy knight, and have praised and cherished you very dearly. You may receive a queen's whole love, if such be your care. Be content: he to whom my heart is given, has small reason to complain him of the alms."

"Lady," answered the knight, "grant me leave to go, for this grace is not for me. I am the King's man, and dare not break my troth. Not for the highest lady in the world, not even for her love, will I set this reproach upon my lord."

When the Queen heard this, she was full of wrath, and spoke many hot and bitter words.

"Launfal," she cried, "well I know that you think little of woman and her love. There are sins more black that a man may have upon his soul. Traitor you are, and false. Right evil counsel gave they to my lord, who prayed him to suffer you about his person. You remain only for his harm and loss."

Launfal was very dolent to hear this thing. He was not slow to take up the Queen's glove, and in his haste spake words that he repented long, and with tears.

"Lady," said he, "I am not of that guild of which you speak. Neither am I a despiser of woman, since I love, and am loved, of one who would bear the prize from all the ladies in the land. Dame, know now and be persuaded, that she, whom I serve, is so rich

in state, that the very meanest of her maidens, excels you, Lady Queen, as much in clerly skill and goodness, as in sweetness of body and face, and in every virtue."

The Queen rose straightway to her feet, and fled to her chamber, weeping. Right wrathful and heavy was she, because of the words that had besmirched her. She lay sick upon her bed, from which, she said, she would never rise, till the King had done her justice, and righted this bitter wrong. Now the King that day had taken his pleasure within the woods. He returned from the chase towards evening, and sought the chamber of the Queen. When the lady saw him, she sprang from her bed, and kneeling at his feet, pleaded for grace and pity. Launfal—she said—had shamed her, since he required her love. When she had put him by, very foully had he reviled her, boasting that his love was already set on a lady, so proud and noble, that her meanest wench went more richly, and smiled more sweetly, than the Queen. Thereat the King waxed marvellously wrathful, and swore a great oath that he would set Launfal within a fire, or hang him from a tree, if he could not deny this thing, before his peers.

Arthur came forth from the Queen's chamber, and called to him three of his lords. These he sent to seek the knight who so evilly had entreated the Queen. Launfal, for his part, had returned to his lodging, in a sad and sorrowful case. He saw very clearly that he had lost his friend, since he had declared their love to men. Launfal sat within his chamber, sick and heavy of thought. Often he called upon his friend, but the lady would not hear his voice. He bewailed his evil lot, with tears; for grief he came nigh to swoon; a hundred times he implored the Maiden that she would deign to speak with her knight. Then, since the lady yet refrained from speech, Launfal cursed his hot and unruly tongue. Very near he came to ending all this trouble with his knife. Naught he found to do but to wring his hands, and call upon the Maiden, begging her to forgive his trespass, and to talk with him again, as friend to friend.

But little peace is there for him who is harassed by a King. There came presently to Launfal's hostel those three barons from the Court. These bade the knight forthwith to go with them to Arthur's presence, to acquit him of this wrong against the Queen. Launfal went forth, to his own deep sorrow. Had any man slain him on the road, he would have counted him his friend. He stood before the King, downcast and speechless, being dumb by reason of that great grief, of which he showed the picture and image.

Arthur looked upon his captive very evilly.

"Vassal," said he, harshly, "you have done me a bitter wrong. It was a foul deed to seek to shame me in this ugly fashion, and to smirch the honour of the Queen. Is it folly or lightness which leads you to boast of that lady, the least of whose maidens is fairer, and goes more richly, than the Queen?"

Launfal protested that never had he set such shame upon his lord. Word by word he told the tale of how he denied the Queen, within the orchard. But concerning that which he had spoken of the lady, he owned the truth, and his folly. The love of which he bragged was now lost to him, by his own exceeding fault. He cared little for his life, and was content to obey the judgment of the Court.

Right wrathful was the King at Launfal's words. He conjured his barons to give him such wise counsel herein, that wrong might be done to none. The lords did the King's bidding, whether good came of the matter, or evil. They gathered themselves together, and appointed a certain day that Launfal should abide the judgment of his peers. For his part Launfal must give pledge and surety to his lord, that he would come before this judgment in his own body. If he might not give such surety then he should be held captive till the appointed day. When the lords of the King's household returned to tell him of their counsel, Arthur demanded that Launfal should put such pledge in his hand, as they had said. Launfal was altogether mazed and bewildered at this judgment, for he had neither friend nor kindred in the land. He would have been set in prison, but Gawain came first to offer himself as his surety, and with him, all the knights of his fellowship. These gave into the King's hand as pledge, the fiefs and lands that they held of his Crown. The King having taken pledges from the sureties, Launfal returned to his lodging, and with him certain knights of his com-

pany. They blamed him greatly because of his foolish love, and chastened him grievously by reason of the sorrow he made before men. Every day they came to his chamber, to know of his meat and drink, for much they feared that presently he would become mad.

The lords of the household came together on the day appointed for this judgment. The King was on his chair, with the Queen sitting at his side. The sureties brought Launfal within the hall, and rendered him into the hands of his peers. Right sorrowful were they because of his plight. A great company of his fellowship did all that they were able to acquit him of this charge. When all was set out, the King demanded the judgment of the Court, according to the accusation and the answer. The barons went forth in much trouble and thought to consider this matter. Many amongst them grieved for the peril of a good knight in a strange land; others held that it were well for Launfal to suffer, because of the wish and malice of their lord. Whilst they were thus perplexed, the Duke of Cornwall rose in the council, and said,

"Lords, the King pursues Launfal as a traitor, and would slay him with the sword, by reason that he bragged of the beauty of his maiden, and roused the jealousy of the Queen. By the faith that I owe this company, none complains of Launfal, save only the King. For our part we would know the truth of this business, and do justice between the King and his man. We would also show proper reverence to our own liege lord. Now, if it be according to Arthur's will, let us take oath of Launfal, that he seek this lady, who has put such strife between him and the Queen. If her beauty be such as he has told us, the Queen will have no cause for wrath. She must pardon Launfal for his rudeness, since it will be plain that he did not speak out of a malicious heart. Should Launfal fail his word, and not return with the lady, or should her fairness fall beneath his boast, then let him be cast off from our fellowship, and be sent forth from the service of the King."

This counsel seemed good to the lords of the household. They sent certain of his friends to Launfal, to acquaint him with their judgment, bidding him to pray his damsel to the Court, that he might be acquitted of this blame. The knight made answer that in no wise could he do this thing. So the sureties returned before the judges, saying that Launfal hoped neither for refuge nor for succour from the lady, and Arthur urged them to a speedy ending, because of the prompting of the Queen.

The judges were about to give sentence upon Launfal, when they saw two maidens come riding towards the palace, upon two white ambling palfreys. Very sweet and dainty were these maidens, and richly clothed in garments of crimson sendal, closely girt and fashioned to their bodies. All men, old and young, looked willingly upon them, for fair they were to see. Gawain, and three knights of his company, went straight to Launfal, and showed him these maidens, praying him to say which of them was his friend. But he answered never a word. The maidens dismounted from their palfreys, and coming before the dais where the King was seated, spake him fairly, as they were fair.

"Sire, prepare now a chamber, hung with silken cloths, where it is seemly for my lady to dwell; for she would lodge with you awhile."

This gift the King granted gladly. He called to him two knights of his household, and bade them bestow the maidens in such chambers as were fitting to their degree. The maidens being gone, the King required of his barons to proceed with their judgment, saying that he had sore displeasure at the slowness of the cause.

"Sire," replied the barons, "we rose from Council, because of the damsels who entered in the hall. We will at once resume the sitting, and give our judgment without more delay."

The barons again were gathered together, in much thought and trouble, to consider this matter. There was great strife and dissension amongst them, for they knew not what to do. In the midst of all this noise and tumult, there came two other damsels riding to the hall on two Spanish mules. Very richly arrayed were these damsels in raiment of fine needlework, and their kirtles were covered by fresh fair mantles, embroidered with gold. Great joy had Launfal's comrades when they marked these ladies. They said between themselves that doubtless they came for the succour of the good knight. Gawain, and certain of his company, made haste to

Launfal, and said, "Sir, be not cast down. Two ladies are near at hand, right dainty of dress, and gracious of person. Tell us truly, for the love of God, is one of these your friend?"

But Launfal answered very simply that never before had he seen these damsels with his eyes, nor known and loved them in his heart.

The maidens dismounted from their mules, and stood before Arthur, in the sight of all. Greatly were they praised of many, because of their beauty, and of the colour of their face and hair. Some there were who deemed already that the Queen was overborne.

The elder of the damsels carried herself modestly and well, and sweetly told over the message wherewith she was charged.

"Sire, make ready for us chambers, where we may abide with our lady, for even now she comes to speak with thee."

The King commanded that the ladies should be led to their companions, and bestowed in the same honourable fashion as they. Then he bade the lords of his household to consider their judgment, since he would endure no further respite. The Court already had given too much time to the business, and the Queen was growing wrathful, because of the blame that was hers. Now the judges were about to proclaim their sentence, when, amidst the tumult of the town, there came riding to the palace the flower of all the ladies of the world. She came mounted upon a palfrey, white as snow, which carried her softly, as though she loved her burthen. Beneath the sky was no goodlier steed, nor one more gentle to the hand. The harness of the palfrey was so rich, that no king on earth might hope to buy trappings so precious, unless he sold or set his realm in pledge. The Maiden herself showed such as I will tell you. Passing slim was the lady, sweet of bodice and slender of girdle. Her throat was whiter than snow on branch, and her eyes were like flowers in the pallor of her face. She had a witching mouth, a dainty nose, and an open brow. Her eyebrows were brown, and her golden hair parted in two soft waves upon her head. She was clad in a shift of spotless linen, and above her snowy kirtle was set a mantle of royal purple, clasped upon her breast. She carried a hooded falcon upon her glove, and a greyhound followed closely after. As the Maiden rode at a slow pace through the streets of the city, there was none, neither great nor small, youth nor sergeant, but ran forth from his house, that he might content his heart with so great beauty. Every man that saw her with his eyes, marvelled at a fairness beyond that of any earthly woman. Little he cared for any mortal maiden, after he had seen this sight. The friends of Sir Launfal hastened to the knight, to tell him of his lady's succour, if so it were according to God's will.

"Sir comrade, truly is not this your friend? This lady is neither black nor golden, mean nor tall. She is only the most lovely thing in all the world."

When Launfal heard this, he sighed, for by their words he knew again his friend. He raised his head, and as the blood rushed to his face, speech flowed from his lips.

"By my faith," cried he, "yes, she is indeed my friend. It is a small matter now whether men slay me, or set me free; for I am made whole of my hurt just by looking on her face."

The Maiden entered in the palace—where none so fair had come before—and stood before the King, in the presence of his household. She loosed the clasp of her mantle, so that men might the more easily perceive the grace of her person. The courteous King advanced to meet her, and all the Court got them on their feet, and pained themselves in her service. When the lords had gazed upon her for a space, and praised the sum of her beauty, the lady spake to Arthur in this fashion, for she was anxious to begone.

"Sire, I have loved one of thy vassals,—the knight who stands in bonds, Sir Launfal. He was always misprized in thy Court, and his every action turned to blame. What he said, that thou knowest; for over hasty was his tongue before the Queen. But he never craved her in love, however loud his boasting. I cannot choose that he should come to hurt or harm by me. In the hope of freeing Launfal from his bonds, I have obeyed thy summons. Let now thy barons look boldly upon my face, and deal justly in this quarrel between the Queen and me."

The King commanded that this should be done, and looking upon her eyes, not one of the judges but was persuaded that her favour exceeded that of the Queen.

Since then Launfal had not spoken in malice against his lady, the lords of the household gave him again his sword. When the trial had come thus to an end the Maiden took her leave of the King, and made her ready to depart. Gladly would Arthur have had her lodge with him for a little, and many a lord would have rejoiced in her service, but she might not tarry. Now without the hall stood a great stone of dull marble, where it was the wont of lords, departing from the Court, to climb into the saddle, and Launfal by the stone. The Maiden came forth from the doors of the palace, and mounting on the stone, seated herself on the palfrey, behind her friend. Then they rode across the plain together, and were no more seen.

The Bretons tell that the knight was ravished by his lady to an island, very dim and very fair, known as Avalon. But none has had speech with Launfal and his faery love since then, and for my part I can tell you no more of the matter.

THE LAY OF THE TWO LOVERS

Once upon a time there lived in Normandy two lovers, who were passing fond, and were brought by Love to Death. The story of their love was bruited so abroad, that the Bretons made a song in their own tongue, and named this song the Lay of the Two Lovers.

In Neustria—that men call Normandy—there is verily a high and marvellously great mountain, where lie the relics of the Two Children. Near this high place the King of those parts caused to be built a certain fair and cunning city, and since he was lord of the Pistrians, it was known as Pistres. The town yet endures, with its towers and houses, to bear witness to the truth; moreover the country thereabouts is known to us all as the Valley of Pistres.

This King had one fair daughter, a damsel sweet of face and gracious of manner, very near to her father's heart, since he had lost his Queen. The maiden increased in years and favour, but he took no heed to her trothing, so that men—yea, even his own people—blamed him greatly for this thing. When the King heard thereof he was passing heavy and dolent, and considered within himself how he might be delivered from this grief. So then, that none should carry off his child, he caused it to be proclaimed, both far and near, by script and trumpet, that he alone should wed the maid, who would bear her in his arms, to the pinnacle of the great and perilous mountain, and that without rest or stay. When this news was noised about the country, many came upon the quest. But strive as they would they might not enforce themselves more than they were able. However mighty they were of body, at the last they failed upon the mountain, and fell with their burthen to the ground. Thus, for a while, was none so bold as to seek the high Princess.

Now in this country lived a squire, son to a certain count of that realm, seemly of semblance and courteous, and right desirous to win that prize, which was so coveted of all. He was a welcome guest at the Court, and the King talked with him very willingly. This squire had set his heart upon the daughter of the King, and many a time spoke in her ear, praying her to give him again the love he had bestowed upon her. So seeing him brave and courteous, she esteemed him for the gifts which gained him the favour of the King, and they loved together in their youth. But they hid this matter from all about the Court. This thing was very grievous to them, but the damoiseau thought within himself that it were good to bear the pains he knew, rather than to seek out others that might prove sharper still. Yet in the end, altogether distraught by love, this prudent varlet sought his friend, and showed her his case, saying that he urgently required of her that she would flee with him, for no longer could he endure the weariness of his days. Should he ask her of the King, well he knew that by reason of his love he would refuse the gift, save he bore her in his arms up the steep mount. Then the maiden made answer to her lover, and said,

"Fair friend, well I know you may not carry me to that high place. Moreover should we take to flight, my father would suffer wrath and sorrow beyond measure, and go heavily all his days. Certainly my love is too fond to plague him thus, and we must seek another counsel, for this is not to my heart. Hearken well. I have kindred in Salerno, of rich estate. For more than thirty years my aunt has studied there the art of medicine, and knows the secret

gift of every root and herb. If you hasten to her, bearing letters from me, and show her your adventure, certainly she will find counsel and cure. Doubt not that she will discover some cunning simple, that will strengthen your body, as well as comfort your heart. Then return to this realm with your potion, and ask me at my father's hand. He will deem you but a stripling, and set forth the terms of his bargain, that to him alone shall I be given who knows how to climb the perilous mountain, without pause or rest, bearing his lady between his arms."

When the varlet heard this cunning counsel of the maiden, he rejoiced greatly, and thanking her sweetly for her rede, craved permission to depart. He returned to his own home, and gathering together a goodly store of silken cloths most precious, he bestowed his gear upon the pack horses, and made him ready for the road. So with a little company of men, mounted on swift palfreys, and most privy to his mind, he arrived at Salerno. Now the squire made no long stay at his lodging, but as soon as he might, went to the damsel's kindred to open out his mind. He delivered to the aunt the letters he carried from his friend, and bewailed their evil case. When the dame had read these letters with him, line by line, she charged him to lodge with her awhile, till she might do according to his wish. So by her sorceries, and for the love of her maid, she brewed such a potion that no man, however wearied and outworn, but by drinking this philtre, would not be refreshed in heart and blood and bones. Such virtue had this medicine, directly it were drunken. This simple she poured within a little flacket, and gave it to the varlet, who received the gift with great joy and delight, and returned swiftly to his own land.

The varlet made no long sojourn in his home. He repaired straightway to the Court, and, seeking out the King, required of him his fair daughter in marriage, promising, for his part, that were she given him, he would bear her in his arms to the summit of the mount. The King was no wise wrath at his presumption. He smiled rather at his folly, for how should one so young and slender succeed in a business wherein so many mighty men had failed. Therefore he appointed a certain day for this judgment. Moreover he caused letters to be written to his vassals and his friends—passing none by—bidding them to see the end of this adventure. Yea, with public cry and sound of trumpet he bade all who would, come to behold the stripling carry his fair daughter to the pinnacle of the mountain. And from every region round about men came to learn the issue of this thing. But for her part the fair maiden did all that she was able to bring her love to a good end. Ever was it fast day and fleshless day with her, so that by any means she might lighten the burthen that her friend must carry in his arms.

Now on the appointed day this young dansellon came very early to the appointed place, bringing the flacket with him. When the great company were fully met together, the King led forth his daughter before them; and all might see that she was arrayed in nothing but her smock. The varlet took the maiden in his arms, but first he gave her the flask with the precious brewage to carry, since for pride he might not endure to drink therefrom, save at utmost peril. The squire set forth at a great pace, and climbed briskly till he was halfway up the mount. Because of the joy he had in clasping his burthen, he gave no thought to the potion. But she—she knew the strength was failing in his heart.

"Fair friend," said she, "well I know that you tire: drink now, I pray you, of the flacket, and so shall your manhood come again at need."

But the varlet answered,

"Fair love, my heart is full of courage; nor for any reason will I pause, so long as I can hold upon my way. It is the noise of all this folk—the tumult and the shouting—that makes my steps uncertain. Their cries distress me, I do not dare to stand."

But when two thirds of the course was won, the grasshopper would have tripped him off his feet. Urgently and often the maiden prayed him, saying,

"Fair friend, drink now of thy cordial."

But he would neither hear, nor give credence to her words. A mighty anguish filled his bosom. He climbed upon the summit of the mountain, and pained himself grievously to bring his journey

to an end. This he might not do. He reeled and fell, nor could he rise again, for the heart had burst within his breast.

When the maiden saw her lover's piteous plight, she deemed that he had swooned by reason of his pain. She kneeled hastily at his side, and put the enchanted brewage to his lips, but he could neither drink nor speak, for he was dead, as I have told you. She bewailed his evil lot, with many shrill cries, and flung the useless flacket far away. The precious potion bestrewed the ground, making a garden of that desolate place. For many saving herbs have been found there since that day by the simple folk of that country, which from the magic philtre derived all their virtue.

But when the maiden knew that her lover was dead, she made such wondrous sorrow, as no man had ever seen. She kissed his eyes and mouth, and falling upon his body, took him in her arms, and pressed him closely to her breast. There was no heart so hard as not to be touched by her sorrow; for in this fashion died a dame, who was fair and sweet and gracious, beyond the wont of the daughters of men.

Now the King and his company, since these two lovers came not again, presently climbed the mountain to learn their end. But when the King came upon them lifeless, and fast in that embrace, incontinent he fell to the ground, bereft of sense. After his speech had returned to him, he was passing heavy, and lamented their doleful case, and thus did all his people with him.

Three days they kept the bodies of these two fair children from earth, with uncovered face. On the third day they sealed them fast in a goodly coffin of marble, and by the counsel of all men, laid them softly to rest on that mountain where they died. Then they departed from them, and left them together, alone.

Since this adventure of the Two Children this hill is known as the Mountain of the Two Lovers, and their story being bruited abroad, the Breton folk have made a Lay thereof, even as I have rehearsed before you.

THE LAY OF THE WERE-WOLF

Amongst the tales I tell you once again, I would not forget the Lay of the Were-Wolf. Such beasts as he are known in every land. Bisclavaret he is named in Brittany; whilst the Norman calls him Garwal.

It is a certain thing, and within the knowledge of all, that many a christened man has suffered this change, and ran wild in woods, as a Were-Wolf. The Were-Wolf is a fearsome beast. He lurks within the thick forest, mad and horrible to see. All the evil that he may, he does. He goeth to and fro, about the solitary place, seeking man, in order to devour him. Hearken, now, to the adventure of the Were-Wolf, that I have to tell.

In Brittany there dwelt a baron who was marvellously esteemed of all his fellows. He was a stout knight, and a comely, and a man of office and repute. Right private was he to the mind of his lord, and dear to the counsel of his neighbours. This baron was wedded to a very worthy dame, right fair to see, and sweet of semblance. All his love was set on her, and all her love was given again to him. One only grief had this lady. For three whole days in every week her lord was absent from her side. She knew not where he went, nor on what errand. Neither did any of his house know the business which called him forth.

On a day when this lord was come again to his house, altogether joyous and content, the lady took him to task, right sweetly, in this fashion, "Husband," said she, "and fair, sweet friend, I have a certain thing to pray of you. Right willingly would I receive this gift, but I fear to anger you in the asking. It is better for me to have an empty hand, than to gain hard words."

When the lord heard this matter, he took the lady in his arms, very tenderly, and kissed her.

"Wife," he answered, "ask what you will. What would you have, for it is yours already?"

"By my faith," said the lady, "soon shall I be whole. Husband, right long and wearisome are the days that you spend away from your home. I rise from my bed in the morning, sick at heart, I know not why. So fearful am I, lest you do aught to your loss, that I may not find any comfort. Very quickly shall I die for reason of my dread. Tell me now, where you go, and on what business!"

How may the knowledge of one who loves so closely, bring you to harm?"

"Wife," made answer the lord, "nothing but evil can come if I tell you this secret. For the mercy of God do not require it of me. If you but knew, you would withdraw yourself from my love, and I should be lost indeed."

When the lady heard this, she was persuaded that her baron sought to put her by with jesting words. Therefore she prayed and required him the more urgently, with tender looks and speech, till he was overborne, and told her all the story, hiding naught.

"Wife, I become Bisclavaret. I enter in the forest, and live on prey and roots, within the thickest of the wood."

After she had learned his secret, she prayed and entreated the more as to whether he ran in his raiment, or went spoiled of vesture.

"Wife," said he, "I go naked as a beast."

"Tell me, for hope of grace, what you do with your clothing?"

"Fair wife, that will I never. If I should lose my raiment, or even be marked as I quit my vesture, then a Were-Wolf I must go for all the days of my life. Never again should I become man, save in that hour my clothing were given back to me. For this reason never will I show my lair."

"Husband," replied the lady to him, "I love you better than all the world. The less cause have you for doubting my faith, or hiding any tittle from me. What savour is here of friendship? How have I made forfeit of your love; for what sin do you mistrust my honour? Open now your heart, and tell what is good to be known."

So at the end, outwearied and overborne by her importunity, he could no longer refrain, but told her all.

"Wife," said he, "within this wood, a little from the path, there is a hidden way, and at the end thereof an ancient chapel, where oftentimes I have bewailed my lot. Near by is a great hollow stone, concealed by a bush, and there is the secret place where I hide my raiment, till I would return to my own home."

On hearing this marvel the lady became sanguine of visage, because of her exceeding fear. She dared no longer to lie at his side, and turned over in her mind, this way and that, how best she could get her from him. Now there was a certain knight of those parts, who, for a great while, had sought and required this lady for her love. This knight had spent long years in her service, but little enough had he got thereby, not even fair words, or a promise. To him the dame wrote a letter, and meeting, made her purpose plain.

"Fair friend," said she, "be happy. That which you have coveted so long a time, I will grant without delay. Never again will I deny your suit. My heart, and all I have to give, are yours, so take me now as love and dame."

Right sweetly the knight thanked her for her grace, and pledged her faith and fealty. When she had confirmed him by an oath, then she told him all this business of her lord—why he went, and what he became, and of his ravening within the wood. So she showed him of the chapel, and of the hollow stone, and of how to spoil the Were-Wolf of his vesture. Thus, by the kiss of his wife, was Bisclavaret betrayed. Often enough had he ravished his prey in desolate places, but from this journey he never returned. His kinsfolk and acquaintance came together to ask of his tidings, when this absence was noised abroad. Many a man, on many a day, searched the woodland, but none might find him, nor learn where Bisclavaret was gone.

The lady was wedded to the knight who had cherished her for so long a space. More than a year had passed since Bisclavaret disappeared. Then it chanced that the King would hunt in that self-same wood where the Were-Wolf lurked. When the hounds were unleashed they ran this way and that, and swiftly came upon his scent. At the view the huntsman winded on his horn, and the whole pack were at his heels. They followed him from morn to eve, till he was torn and bleeding, and was all adread lest they should pull him down. Now the King was very close to the quarry, and when Bisclavaret looked upon his master, he ran to him for pity and for grace. He took the stirrup within his paws, and fawned upon the prince's foot. The King was very fearful at this sight, but presently he called his courtiers to his aid.

"Lords," cried he, "hasten hither, and see this marvellous thing. Here is a beast who has the sense of man. He abases himself before

his foe, and cries for mercy, although he cannot speak. Beat off the hounds, and let no man do him harm. We will hunt no more to-day, but return to our own place, with the wonderful quarry we have taken."

The King turned him about, and rode to his hall, Bisclavaret following at his side. Very near to his master the Were-Wolf went, like any dog, and had no care to seek again the wood. When the King had brought him safely to his own castle, he rejoiced greatly, for the beast was fair and strong, no mightier had any man seen. Much pride had the King in his marvellous beast. He held him so dear, that he bade all those who wished for his love, to cross the Wolf in naught, neither to strike him with a rod, but ever to see that he was richly fed and kennelled warm. This commandment the Court observed willingly. So all the day the Wolf sported with the lords, and at night he lay within the chamber of the King. There was not a man who did not make much of the beast, so frank was he and debonair. None had reason to do him wrong, for ever was he about his master, and for his part did evil to none. Every day were these two companions together, and all perceived that the King loved him as his friend.

Hearken now to that which chanced.

The King held a high Court, and bade his great vassals and barons, and all the lords of his vinery to the feast. Never was there a goodlier feast, nor one set forth with sweeter show and pomp. Amongst those who were bidden, came that same knight who had the wife of Bisclavaret for dame. He came to the castle, richly gowned, with a fair company, but little he deemed whom he would find so near. Bisclavaret marked his foe the moment he stood within the hall. He ran towards him, and seized him with his fangs, in the King's very presence, and to the view of all. Doubtless he would have done him much mischief, had not the King called and chidden him, and threatened him with a rod. Once, and twice, again, the Wolf set upon the knight in the very light of day. All men marvelled at his malice, for sweet and serviceable was the beast, and to that hour had shown hatred of none. With one consent the household deemed that this deed was done with full reason, and that the Wolf had suffered at the knight's hand some bitter wrong. Right wary of his foe was the knight until the feast had ended, and all the barons had taken farewell of their lord, and departed, each to his own house. With these, amongst the very first, went that lord whom Bisclavaret so fiercely had assailed. Small was the wonder that he was glad to go.

No long while after this adventure it came to pass that the courteous King would hunt in that forest where Bisclavaret was found. With the prince came his wolf, and a fair company. Now at nightfall the King abode within a certain lodge of that country, and this was known of that dame who before was the wife of Bisclavaret. In the morning the lady clothed her in her most dainty apparel, and hastened to the lodge, since she desired to speak with the King, and to offer him a rich present. When the lady entered in the chamber, neither man nor leash might restrain the fury of the Wolf. He became as a mad dog in his hatred and malice. Breaking from his bonds he sprang at the lady's face, and bit the nose from her visage. From every side men ran to the succour of the dame. They beat off the wolf from his prey, and for a little would have cut him in pieces with their swords. But a certain wise counsellor said to the King,

"Sire, hearken now to me. This beast is always with you, and there is not one of us all who has not known him for long. He goes in and out amongst us, nor has molested any man, neither done wrong or felony to any, save only to this dame, one only time as we have seen. He has done evil to this lady, and to that knight, who is now the husband of the dame. Sire, she was once the wife of that lord who was so close and private to your heart, but who went, and none might find where he had gone. Now, therefore, put the dame in a sure place, and question her straitly, so that she may tell—if perchance she knows thereof—for what reason this Beast holds her in such mortal hate. For many a strange deed has chanced, as well we know, in this marvellous land of Brittany."

The King listened to these words, and deemed the counsel good. He laid hands upon the knight, and put the dame in surety in another place. He caused them to be questioned right straitly, so that their torment was very grievous. At the end, partly because

of her distress, and partly by reason of her exceeding fear, the lady's lips were loosed, and she told her tale. She showed them of the betrayal of her lord, and how his raiment was stolen from the hollow stone. Since then she knew not where he went, nor what had befallen him, for he had never come again to his own land. Only, in her heart, well she deemed and was persuaded, that Bisclavret was he.

Straightway the King demanded the vesture of his baron, whether this were to the wish of the lady, or whether it were against her wish. When the raiment was brought him, he caused it to be spread before Bisclavret, but the Wolf made as though he had not seen. Then that cunning and crafty counsellor took the King apart, that he might give him a fresh rede.

"Sire," said he, "you do not wisely, nor well, to set this raiment before Bisclavret, in the sight of all. In shame and much tribulation must he lay aside the beast, and again become man. Carry your wolf within your most secret chamber, and put his vestment therein. Then close the door upon him, and leave him alone for a space. So we shall see presently whether the ravening beast may indeed return to human shape."

The King carried the Wolf to his chamber, and shut the doors upon him fast. He delayed for a brief while, and taking two lords of his fellowship with him, came again to the room. Entering therein, all three, softly together, they found the knight sleeping in the King's bed, like a little child. The King ran swiftly to the bed and taking his friend in his arms, embraced and kissed him fondly, above a hundred times. When man's speech returned once more, he told him of his adventure. Then the King restored to his friend the fief that was stolen from him, and gave such rich gifts, moreover, as I cannot tell. As for the wife who had betrayed Bisclavret, he bade her avoid his country, and chased her from the realm. So she went forth, she and her second lord together, to seek a more abiding city, and were no more seen.

The adventure that you have heard is no vain fable. Verily and indeed it chanced as I have said. The Lay of the Were-Wolf, truly, was written that it should ever be borne in mind.

THE LAY OF THE ASH TREE

Now will I tell you the Lay of the Ash Tree, according to the story that I know.

In ancient days there dwelt two knights in Brittany, who were neighbours and close friends. These two lords were brave and worthy gentlemen, rich in goods and lands, and near both in heart and home. Moreover each was wedded to a dame. One of these ladies was with child, and when her time was come, she was delivered of two boys. Her husband was right happy and content. For the joy that was his, he sent messages to his neighbour, telling that his wife had brought forth two sons, and praying that one of them might be christened with his name. The rich man was at meat when the messenger came before him. The servitor kneeled before the dais, and told his message in his ear. The lord thanked God for the happiness that had befallen his friend, and bestowed a fair horse on the bringer of good tidings. His wife, sitting at board with her husband, heard the story of the messenger, and smiled at his news. Proud she was, and sly, with an envious heart, and a rancorous tongue. She made no effort to bridle her lips, but spoke lightly before the servants of the house, and said,

"I marvel greatly that so reputable a man as our neighbour, should publish his dishonour to my lord. It is a shameful thing for any wife to have two children at a birth. We all know that no woman brings forth two at one bearing, except two husbands have aided her therein."

Her husband looked upon her in silence for awhile, and when he spoke it was to blame her very sternly.

"Wife," he said, "be silent. It is better to be dumb, than to utter such words as these. As you know well, there is not a breath to tarnish this lady's good name."

The folk of the house, who listened to these words, stored them in their hearts, and told abroad the tale, spoken by their lady. Very soon it was known throughout Brittany. Greatly was the lady blamed for her evil tongue, and not a woman who heard thereof—whether she were rich or poor—but who scorned her for her mal-

ice. The servant who carried the message, on his return repeated to his lord of what he had seen and heard. Passing heavy was the knight, and knew not what to do. He doubted his own true wife, and suspected her the more sorely, because she had done naught that was in any way amiss.

The lady, who so foully slandered her fellow, fell with child in the same year. Her neighbour was avenged upon her, for when her term was come, she became the mother of two daughters. Sick at heart was she. She was right sorrowful, and lamented her evil case.

"Alas," she said, "what shall I do, for I am dishonoured for all my days. Shamed I am, it is the simple truth. When my lord and his kinsfolk shall hear of what has chanced, they will never believe me a stainless wife. They will remember how I judged all women in my plight. They will recall how I said before my house, that my neighbour could not have been doubly a mother, unless she had first been doubly a wife. I have the best reason now to know that I was wrong, and I am caught in my own snare. She who digs a pit for another, cannot tell that she may not fall into the hole herself. If you wish to speak loudly concerning your neighbour, it is best to say nothing of him but in praise. The only way to keep me from shame, is that one of my children should die. It is a great sin; but I would rather trust to the mercy of God, than suffer scorn and reproach for the rest of my life."

The women about her comforted her as best they might in this trouble. They told her frankly that they would not suffer such wrong to be done, since the slaying of a child was not reckoned a jest. The lady had a maiden near her person, whom she had long held and nourished. The damsel was a freeman's daughter, and was greatly loved and cherished of her mistress. When she saw the lady's tears, and heard the bitterness of her complaint, anguish went to her heart, like a knife. She stooped over her lady, striving to bring her comfort.

"Lady," she said, "take it not so to heart. Give over this grief, for all will yet be well. You shall deliver me one of these children, and I will put her so far from you, that you shall never see her again, nor know shame because of her. I will carry her safe and sound to the door of a church. There I will lay her down. Some honest man shall find her, and—please God—will be at the cost of her nourishing."

Great joy had the lady to hear these words. She promised the maiden that in recompense of her service, she would grant her such guerdon as she should wish. The maiden took the babe—yet smiling in her sleep—and wrapped her in a linen cloth. Above this she set a piece of sanguine silk, brought by the husband of this dame from a bazaar in Constantinople—fairer was never seen. With a silken lace they bound a great ring to the child's arm. This ring was of fine gold, weighing fully an ounce, and was set with garnets most precious.

Letters were graven thereon, so that those who found the maid might understand that she came of a good house. The damsel took the child, and went out from the chamber. When night was come, and all was still, she left the town, and sought the high road leading through the forest. She held on her way, clasping the baby to her breast, till from afar, to her right hand, she heard the howling of dogs and the crowing of cocks. She deemed that she was near a town, and went the lighter for the hope, directing her steps, there, whence the noises came. Presently the damsel entered in a fair city, where was an Abbey, both great and rich. This Abbey was worshipfully ordered, with many nuns in their office and degree, and an Abbess in charge of all. The maiden gazed upon the mighty house, and considered its towers and walls, and the church with its belfry. She went swiftly to the door, and setting the child upon the ground, kneeled humbly to make her prayer.

"Lord," said she, "for the sake of Thy Holy Name, if such be Thy will, preserve this child from death."

Her petition ended, the maiden looked about her, and saw an ash tree, planted to give shadow in a sunny place. It was a fair tree, thick and leafy, and was divided into four strong branches. The maiden took the child again in her arms, and running to the ash, set her within the tree. There she left her, commending her to the care of God. So she returned to her mistress, and told her all that she had done.

Now in this Abbey was a porter, whose duty it was to open the doors of the church, before folk came to hear the service of God. This night he rose at his accustomed hour, lighted candles and lamps, rang the bells, and set wide the doors. His eyes fell upon the silken stuff within the ash. He thought at first that some bold thief had hidden his spoil within the tree. He felt with his hand to discover what it might be, and found that it was a little child. The porter praised God for His goodness; he took the babe, and going again to his house, called to his daughter, who was a widow, with an infant yet in the cradle.

"Daughter," he cried, "get from bed at once; light your candle, and kindle the fire. I bring you a little child, whom I have found within our ash. Take her to your breast; cherish her against the cold, and bathe her in warm water."

The widow did according to her father's will. She kindled a fire, and taking the babe, washed and cherished her in her need. Very certain she was, when she saw that rich stuff of crimson samite, and the golden ring about the arm, that the girl was come of an honourable race. The next day, when the office was ended, the porter prayed the Abbess that he might have speech with her as she left the church. He related his story, and told of the finding of the child. The Abbess bade him to fetch the child, dressed in such fashion as she was discovered in the ash. The porter returned to his house, and showed the babe right gladly to his dame. The Abbess observed the infant closely, and said that she would be at the cost of her nourishing, and would cherish her as a sister's child. She commanded the porter strictly to forget that he took her from the ash. In this manner it chanced that the maiden was tended of the Abbess. The lady considered the maid as her niece, and since she was taken from the ash, gave her the name of Frêne. By this name she was known of all, within the Abbey precincts, where she was nourished.

When Frêne came to that age in which a girl turns to woman, there was no fairer maiden in Brittany, nor so sweet a damsel. Frank, she was, and open, but discreet in semblance and in speech. To see her was to love her, and to prize her smile above the beauty of the world. Now at Dol there lived a lord of whom much good was spoken. I will tell you his name. The folk of his country called him Buron. This lord heard speak of the maiden, and began to love her, for the sweetness men told of her. As he rode home from some tournament, he passed near the convent, and prayed the Abbess that he might look upon her niece. The Abbess gave him his desire. Greatly was the maiden to his mind. Very fair he found her, sweetly schooled and fashioned, modest and courteous to all. If he might not win her to his love, he counted himself the more forlorn. This lord was at his wits end, for he knew not what to do. If he repaired often to the convent, the Abbess would consider of the cause of his comings, and he would never again see the maiden with his eyes. One thing only gave him a little hope. Should he endow the Abbey of his wealth, he would make it his debtor for ever. In return he might ask a little room, where he might abide to have their fellowship, and, at times, withdraw him from the world. This he did. He gave richly of his goods to the Abbey. Often, in return, he went to the convent, but for other reasons than for penitence and peace. He besought the maiden, and with prayers and promises, persuaded her to set upon him her love. When this lord was assured that she loved him, on a certain day he reasoned with her in this manner.

"Fair friend," said he, "since you have given me your love, come with me, where I can cherish you before all the world. You know, as well as I, that if your aunt should perceive our friendship, she would be passing wrath, and grieve beyond measure. If my counsel seems good, let us flee together, you with me, and I with you. Certes, you shall never have cause to regret your trust, and of my riches you shall have the half."

When she who loved so fondly heard these words, she granted of her tenderness what it pleased him to have, and followed after where he would. Frêne fled to her lover's castle, carrying with her that silken cloth and ring, which might do her service on a day. These the Abbess had given her again, telling her how one morning at prime she was found upon an ash, this ring and samite her only wealth, since she was not her niece. Right carefully had Frêne guarded her treasure from that hour. She shut them closely

in a little chest, and this coffret she bore with her in her flight, for she would neither lose them nor forget.

The lord, with whom the maiden fled, loved and cherished her very dearly. Of all the men and servants of his house, there was not one—either great or small—but who loved and honoured her for her simplicity. They lived long together in love and content, till the fair days passed, and trouble came upon this lord. The knights of his realm drew together, and many a time urged that he should put away his friend, and wed with some rich gentlewoman. They would be joyous if a son were born, to come after to his fief and heritage. The peril was too great to suffer that he remained a bachelor, and without an heir. Never more would they hold him as lord, or serve him with a good heart, if he would not do according to their will.

There being naught else to do, the lord deferred to this counsel of his knights, and begged them to name the lady whom he needs must wed.

"Sir," answered they, "there is a lord of these parts, privy to our counsel, who has but one child, a maid, his only heir. Broad lands will he give as her dowry. This damsel's name is Coudre, and in all this country there is none so fair. Be advised: throw away the ash rod you carry, and take the hazel as your staff. The ash is a barren stock; but the hazel is thick with nuts and delight. We shall be content if you take this maiden as your wife, so it be to the will of God, and she be given you of her kinsfolk."

Buron demanded the hand of the lady in marriage, and her father and kin betrothed her to the lord. Alas! it was hid from all, that these two were twin sisters. It was Frêne's lot to be doubly abandoned, and to see her lover become her sister's husband. When she learned that her friend purposed taking to himself a wife, she made no outcry against his falseness. She continued to serve her lord faithfully, and was diligent in the business of his house. The sergeant and the varlet were marvellously wrathful, when they knew that she must go from amongst them. On the day appointed for the marriage, Buron bade his friends and acquaintance to the feast. Together with these came the Archbishop, and those of Dol who held of him their lands. His betrothed was brought to his home by her mother. Great dread had the mother because of Frêne, for she knew of the love that the lord bore the maiden, and feared lest her daughter should be a stranger in her own hall. She spoke to her son-in-law, counselling him to send Frêne from his house, and to find her an honest man for her husband. Thus there would be quittance between them. Very splendid was the feast. Whilst all was mirth and jollity, the damsel visited the chambers, to see that each was ordered to her lord's pleasure. She hid the torment in her heart, and seemed neither troubled nor downcast. She compassed the bride with every fair observance, and waited upon her right daintily.

Her courage was marvellous to that company of lords and ladies, who observed her curiously. The mother of the bride regarded her also, and praised her privily. She said aloud that had she known the sweetness of this lady, she would not have taken her lover from her, nor spoiled her life for the sake of the bride. The night being come the damsel entered in the bridal chamber to deck the bed against her lord. She put off her mantle, and calling the chamberlains, showed them how their master loved to lie. His bed being softly arrayed, a coverlet was spread upon the linen sheets. Frêne looked upon the coverlet: in her eyes it showed too mean a garnishing for so fair a lord. She turned it over in her mind, and going to her coffret she took therefrom that rich stuff of sanguine silk, and set it on the couch. This she did not only in honour of her friend, but that the Archbishop might not despise the house, when he blessed the marriage bed, according to the rite. When all was ready the mother carried the bride to that chamber where she should lie, to disarray her for the night. Looking upon the bed she marked the silken coverlet, for she had never seen so rich a cloth, save only that in which she wrapped her child. When she remembered of this thing, her heart turned to water. She summoned a chamberlain.

"Tell me," she said, "tell me in good faith where this garniture was found."

"Lady," he made reply, "that you shall know. Our damsel spread it on the bed, because this dossal is richer than the coverlet that

was there before.”

The lady called for the damsel. Frêne came before her in haste, being yet without her mantle. All the mother moved within her, as she plied her with questions.

“Fair friend, hide it not a whit from me. Tell me truly where this fair samite was found; whence came it; who gave it to you? Answer swiftly, and tell me who bestowed on you this cloth?”

The damsel made answer to her:

“Lady, my aunt, the Abbess, gave me this silken stuff, and charged me to keep it carefully. At the same time she gave me a ring, which those who put me forth, had bound upon me.”

“Fair friend, may I see this ring?”

“Certes, lady, I shall be pleased to show it.”

The lady looked closely on the ring, when it was brought. She knew again her own, and the crimson samite flung upon the bed. No doubt was in her mind. She knew and was persuaded that Frêne was her very child. All words were spoken, and there was nothing more to hide.

“Thou art my daughter, fair friend.”

Then for reason of the pity that was hers, she fell to the ground, and lay in a swoon. When the lady came again to herself, she sent for her husband, who, all adread, hastened to the chamber. He marvelled the more sorely when his wife fell at his feet, and embracing him closely, entreated pardon for the evil that she had done.

Knowing nothing of her trespass, he made reply, “Wife, what is this? Between you and me there is nothing to call for forgiveness. Pardon you may have for whatever fault you please. Tell me plainly what is your wish.”

“Husband, my offence is so black, that you had better give me absolution before I tell you the sin. A long time ago, by reason of lightness and malice, I spoke evil of my neighbour, whenas she bore two sons at a birth. I fell afterwards into the very pit that I had digged. Though I told you that I was delivered of a daughter, the truth is that I had borne two maids. One of these I wrapped in our stuff of samite, together with the ring you gave me the first time we met, and caused her to be laid beside a church. Such a sin will out. The cloth and the ring I have found, and I have recognised our maid, whom I had lost by my own folly. She is this very damsel—so fair and amiable to all—whom the knight so greatly loved. Now we have married the lord to her sister.”

The husband made answer, “Wife, if your sin be double, our joy is manifold. Very tenderly hath God dealt with us, in giving us back our child. I am altogether joyous and content to have two daughters for one. Daughter, come to your father’s side.”

The damsel rejoiced greatly to hear this story. Her father tarried no longer, but seeking his son-in-law, brought him to the Archbishop, and related the adventure. The knight knew such joy as was never yet. The Archbishop gave counsel that on the morrow he would part him and her whom he had joined together. This was done, for in the morning he severed them, bed and board. Afterwards he married Frêne to her friend, and her father accorded the damsel with a right good heart. Her mother and sister were with her at the wedding, and for dowry her father gave her the half of his heritage. When they returned to their own realm they took Coude, their daughter, with them. There she was granted to a lord of those parts, and rich was the feast.

When this adventure was bruited abroad, and all the story, the Lay of the Ash Tree was written, so called of the lady, named Frêne.

THE LAY OF THE HONEYSUCKLE

With a glad heart and right good mind will I tell the Lay that men call Honeysuckle; and that the truth may be known of all it shall be told as many a minstrel has sung it to my ear, and as the scribe hath written it for our delight. It is of Tristan and Isoude, the Queen. It is of a love which passed all other love, of love from whence came wondrous sorrow, and whereof they died together in the self-same day.

King Mark was sorely wrath with Tristan, his sister’s son, and bade him avoid his realm, by reason of the love he bore the Queen. So Tristan repaired to his own land, and dwelt for a full year in

South Wales, where he was born. Then since he might not come where he would be, Tristan took no heed to his ways, but let his life run waste to Death. Marvel not overmuch thereat, for he who loves beyond measure must ever be sick in heart and hope, when he may not win according to his wish. So sick in heart and mind was Tristan that he left his kingdom, and returned straight to the realm of his banishment, because that in Cornwall dwelt the Queen. There he hid privily in the deep forest, withdrawn from the eyes of men; only when the evening was come, and all things sought their rest, he prayed the peasant and other mean folk of that country, of their charity to grant him shelter for the night. From the serf he gathered tidings of the King. These gave again to him what they, in turn, had taken from some outlawed knight. Thus Tristan learned that when Pentecost was come King Mark purposed to hold high Court at Tintagel, and keep the feast with pomp and revelry; moreover that thither would ride Isoude, the Queen.

When Tristan heard this thing he rejoiced greatly, since the Queen might not adventure through the forest, except he saw her with his eyes. After the King had gone his way, Tristan entered within the wood, and sought the path by which the Queen must come. There he cut a wand from out a certain hazel-tree, and having trimmed and peeled it of its bark, with his dagger he carved his name upon the wood. This he placed upon her road, for well he knew that should the Queen but mark his name she would bethink her of her friend. Thus had it chanced before. For this was the sum of the writing set upon the wand, for Queen Isoude’s heart alone: how that in this wild place Tristan had lurked and waited long, so that he might look upon her face, since without her he was already dead. Was it not with them as with the Honeysuckle and the Hazel tree she was passing by! So sweetly laced and taken were they in one close embrace, that thus they might remain whilst life endured. But should rough hands part so fond a clasping, the hazel would wither at the root, and the honeysuckle must fail. Fair friend, thus is the case with us, nor you without me, nor I without you.

Now the Queen fared at adventure down the forest path. She spied the hazel wand set upon her road, and well she remembered the letters and the name. She bade the knights of her company to draw rein, and dismount from their palfreys, so that they might refresh themselves a little. When her commandment was done she withdrew from them a space, and called to her Brangwaïne, her maiden, and own familiar friend. Then she hastened within the wood, to come on him whom more she loved than any living soul. How great the joy between these twain, that once more they might speak together softly, face to face. Isoude showed him her delight. She showed in what fashion she strove to bring peace and concord betwixt Tristan and the King, and how grievously his banishment had weighed upon her heart. Thus sped the hour, till it was time for them to part; but when these lovers freed them from the other’s arms, the tears were wet upon their cheeks. So Tristan returned to Wales, his own realm, even as his uncle bade. But for the joy that he had had of her, his friend, for her sweet face, and for the tender words that she had spoken, yea, and for that writing upon the wand, to remember all these things, Tristan, that cunning harper, wrought a new Lay, as shortly I have told you. Goatleaf, men call this song in English. Chèvrefeuille it is named in French; but Goatleaf or Honeysuckle, here you have the very truth in the Lay that I have spoken.

THE LAY OF EQUITAN

In ancient days many a noble lord lived in Brittany beyond the Seas. By reason of their courtesy and nobleness they would gladly keep in remembrance the deeds that were done in the land. That these marvellous things should not be forgotten they fashioned them into Lays. Amongst these Lays I have heard tell of one which is not made to die as though it had never been.

Equitan, lord of Nantes, was a loyal and courteous gentleman, of great worth, beloved by all in his own country. He was set on pleasure, and was Love’s lover, as became a gentle knight. Like many others who dote on woman, he observed neither sense nor measure in love. But it is in the very nature of Love that proportion

cannot enter into the matter.

Equitan had for seneschal a right brave and loyal knight, who was captain of his army, and did justice in his realm. He was often abroad upon his master's business, for the King would not forego his delight for any reason whatever. To dance, to hunt, to fish within the river—this was all his joy. This seneschal was married to a wife, by whom great evil came upon the land. Very desirable was the lady; passing tender of body, and sweet of vesture, coiffed and fretted with gold. Her eyes were blue; her face warmly coloured, with a fragrant mouth, and a dainty nose. Certainly she had no peer in all the realm. The King had heard much in praise of this lady and many a time saluted her upon the way. He had also sent her divers gifts. Often he considered in his mind how best he might get speech with the dame. For his privy pleasure this amorous King went to chase in that country where the seneschal had his castle. The lady being in her own house, Equitan craved a lodging for the night. By this means when the hunt was done, he could speak with her, and show what was in his heart. Equitan found the lady as discreet as courteous. He looked closely upon her, for she was fair of face and person, and sweet of semblance and address. Love bound him captive to his car. The god loosed a shaft which entered deeply in his breast. The arrow pierced to his heart, and from thenceforth he cared nothing for measure, or kingship, or delight. Equitan was so surprised of the lady, that he remained silent and pensive. He heard nothing, and nothing he could do. All night he lay in unrest upon the bed, reproaching himself for what had come to pass.

"Alas," said he, "what evil fate has led me into this land! The sight only of this lady has put such anguish into my heart that my members fail beneath me. It is Love, I deem, who rides me thus cruelly. But if I love this lady I shall do a great wrong. She is the wife of my seneschal, and it is my duty to keep the same love and faith to him as I would wish him to observe with me. If by any means I could know what is in her mind, I should be the easier, for torment is doubled that you bear alone. There is not a dame, however curst, but would rather love than not; for if she were a contemner of love where would be her courtesy? But if she loves, there is not a woman under the sky who would not suck thereout all the advantage that she may. If the matter came to the ears of the seneschal, he ought not to think too hardly of me. He cannot hope to keep such treasure for himself alone; and, certes, I shall claim my portion."

Equitan tossed on his bed, and sighed. His thoughts were still on the lady, so that in a little he said, "I think of the ford, before I come to the river. I go too quickly, for I know not yet whether the lady will take me as her friend. But know I will as swiftly as I can, since I cannot get rest or sleep. I will come before her as soon as it is day, and if she feels as I feel, the sooner I shall be rid of my pain."

The King kept vigil till the daylight came at last. He arose and went forth, as if to the chase. He returned presently, telling that he was sick, and going straight to his chamber, lay upon his bed. The seneschal was very troubled, for he could not imagine the sickness of which his master felt the pangs. He counselled his wife to seek their guest, that she might cheer and comfort him in his trouble. When they were alone the King opened to her his heart. He told her that he was dying for her love, and that if she had no more than friendship to offer, he preferred death before life.

"Sire," replied the dame, "I require a little time to think of what you say, for I cannot answer yes or no, without thought, in a business of this moment. I am not of your wealth, and you are too high a lord, for your love to do more than rest lightly on me. When you have had your desire, it will as lightly fly away. My sorrow would be overlong, if I should love you, and grant you what you wish. It is much the best that between you and me love should not be spoken of. You are a puissant prince; my husband is one of your vassals, and faith and trust should bind us—not the dangerous bond of love. Love is only lasting between like and like. Better is the love of an honest man—so he be of sense and worth—than that of a prince or king, with no loyalty in him. She who sets her love more highly than she can reach, may pluck no fruit from the tree. The rich man deems that love is his of right. He prays little

of his friend, for he thinks none dare take her from his hand, and that her tenderness is his by prize of lordship."

When she had ceased, Equitan made answer, "Lady, I can offer you but short thanks for your words, since they savour of scant courtesy. You speak of love as a burges makes a bargain. Those who desire to get, rather than to give, often find that they have the worse half of the business. There is no lady under heaven—so she be courteous and kind and of a good heart—but would grant her grace to a true lover, even though she have beneath her cloak only a rich prince in his castle. Those who care but for a fresh face—tricksters in love as a cozeners with dice—are justly flouted and deceived, as oftentimes we see. None wastes pity on him who receives the stripes he deserves. Dear lady, let me make myself plain. Do not regard me as your King; look on me as your servant and your friend. I give my word and plight my troth that all my happiness shall be found in your pleasure. Let me not die for your love. You shall be the Dame, and I the page; you shall be the scornful beauty, and I the prayer at your knee."

The King prayed the lady so urgently, so tenderly he sued for grace, that at the last she assured him of her love, and gave him the gift of her heart. They granted rings one to another, and pledged affiancement between them. They kept this faith, and guarded this love, till they died together, and there was an end to all.

Equitan and the lady loved for a great while without it coming to the ears of any. When the King desired to have speech of his friend, he told his household that he would be alone, since it was the day appointed for his bleeding. The King having shut the doors of his chamber, there was none so bold as to enter therein, save he were bidden of his lord. Whilst he was busied in this fashion, the seneschal sat in open court to hear the pleas and right the wrong. He was as much to the King's mind, as his wife was to the King's heart. The lord was so assotted upon the lady that he would neither take to himself a wife, nor listen to a word upon the matter. His people blamed him loudly, so loudly that it came to the ears of the lady. She was passing heavy, for she feared greatly that the barons would have their way. When next she had speech with Equitan, in place of the kiss and sweetness of her customary greeting, she came before him making great sorrow and in tears. The King inquiring the reason of her dolour, the lady replied, "Sire, I lament our love, and the trouble I always said would be mine. You are about to wed the daughter of some King, and my good days are over. Everybody says so, and I know it to be true. What will become of me when you put me away! I will die, rather than lose you, for I may have no other comfort."

The King made answer very tenderly, "Fair friend, you need not fear. There will never be wife of mine to put you from me. I shall never wed, except your husband die, and then it is you who would be my queen and lady. I will leave you for no other dame."

The lady thanked him sweetly for his words. Much was she beholden to him in her heart. Since she was assured that he would not leave her for any other, she turned over swiftly in her mind the profit that would come from her husband's death. Much happiness might be bought at a little cost, if Equitan would lend his aid.

The King made answer that he would do her will to the utmost of his power, whether her counsel were for good or evil.

"Sire," said the lady, "let it please you to hunt the forest within the country where I dwell. You can lodge in my lord's castle, and there you must be bled. Three days after your surgery is done, you must call for your bath. My lord shall be bled with you, so that he may go to his bathing at the same time. It will be your part to keep him at your side, and make him your constant companion. It will be mine to heat the water, and to carry the baths to your chamber. My husband's bath shall boil so fiercely, that no breathing man, having entered therein, may come forth living. When he is dead you must call for your people, and show them how the seneschal has died suddenly in his bath."

Because of his love the King granted her desire, and promised to do according to her will. Before three months were done the King rode to the chase within the lady's realm. He caused surgeons to bleed him for his health, and the seneschal with him. He said that he would take his bath on the third day, and the seneschal required his, too, to be made ready. The lady caused the water to be heated, and carried the baths to the chamber. According to her

device she set a bath beside each bed, filling with boiling water that bath which her lord should enter. Her lord had gone forth for a little, so for a space the King and the lady were alone. They sat on the husband's bed, and looked tenderly each on the other, near by that heated bath. The door of the chamber was kept by a young damsel to give them warning. The seneschal made haste to return, and would have struck on the door of the chamber, but was stayed by the maiden. He put her by, and in his impatience flung the door wide open. Entering he found his master and his wife clasped in each other's arms. When the King saw the seneschal he had no thought but to hide his dishonour. He started up, and sprang with joined feet in the bath that was filled with boiling water. There he perished miserably, in the very snare he had spread for another, who was safe and sound. The seneschal marked what had happened to the King. In his rage he turned to his wife, and laying hands upon her thrust her, head first, in the self-same bath. So they died together, the King first, and the lady afterwards, with him.

Those who are willing to listen to fair words, may learn from this ensample, that he who seeks another's ill often brings the evil upon himself.

As I have told you before, of this adventure the Bretons made the Lay of Equitan, the lady whom he loved, and of their end.

THE LAY OF MILON

He who would tell divers tales must know how to vary the tune. To win the favour of any, he must speak to the understanding of all. I purpose in this place to show you the story of Milon, and—since few words are best—I will set out the adventure as briefly as I may.

Milon was born in South Wales. So great was his prowess that from the day he was dubbed knight there was no champion who could stand before him in the lists. He was a passing fair knight, open and brave, courteous to his friends, and stern to his foes. Men praised his name in whatever realm they talked of gallant deeds—Ireland, Norway, and Wales, yea, from Jutland even to Albania. Since he was praised by the frank, he was therefore envied of the mean. Nevertheless, by reason of his skill with the spear, he was counted a very worshipful knight, and was honourably entreated by many a prince in divers lands.

In Milon's own realm there lived a lord whose name has gone from mind. With this baron dwelt his daughter, a passing fair and gracious damsel. Much talk had this maiden heard of Milon's knightly deeds, so that she began to set her thoughts upon him, because of the good men spoke of him. She sent him a message by a sure hand, saying that if her love was to his mind, sweetly would it be to her heart. Milon rejoiced greatly when he knew this thing. He thanked the lady for her words, giving her love again in return for her own, and swearing that he would never depart therefrom any day of his days. Beyond this courteous answer Milon bestowed on the messenger costly gifts, and made him promises that were richer still.

"Friend," said he, "of your charity I pray you that I may have speech with my friend, in such a fashion that none shall know of our meeting. Carry her this, my golden ring. Tell her, on my part, that so she pleases she shall come to me, or, if it be her better pleasure, I will go to her."

The messenger bade farewell, and returned to his lady. He placed the ring in her hand, saying that he had done her will, as he was bidden to do.

Right joyous was the damsel to know that Milon's love was tender as her own. She required her friend to come for speech within the private garden of her house, where she was wont to take her delight. Milon came at her commandment. He came so often, and so dearly she loved him, that in the end she gave him all that maid may give. When the damsel perceived how it was with her, she sent messages to her friend, telling him of her case, and making great sorrow.

"I have lost my father and all his wealth," said the lady, "for when he hears of this matter he will make of me an example. Either I shall be tormented with the sword, or else he will sell me as a slave in a far country."

(For such was the usage of our fathers in the days of this tale.) Milon grieved sorely, and made answer that he would do the thing the damsel thought most seemly to be done.

"When the child is born," replied the lady, "you must carry him forthwith to my sister. She is a rich dame, pitiful and good, and is wedded to a lord of Northumberland. You will send messages with the babe—both in writing and by speech—that the little innocent is her sister's child. Whether it be a boy or girl his mother will have suffered much because of him, and for her sister's sake you will pray her to cherish the babe. Beyond this I shall set your signet by a lace about his neck, and write letters wherein shall be made plain the name of his sire, and the sad story of his mother. When he shall have grown tall, and of an age to understand these matters, his aunt will give him your ring, and rehearse to him the letter. If this be done, perchance the orphan will not be fatherless all his days."

Milon approved the counsel of the lady, and when her time had come she was brought to bed of a boy. The old nurse who tended her mistress was privy to the damsel's inmost mind. So warily she went to work, so cunning was she in gloss and concealment, that none within the palace knew that there was aught to hide. The damsel looked upon her boy, and saw that he was very fair. She laced the ring about his neck, and set the letter that it were death to find, within a silken chatelaine. The child was then placed in his cradle, swathed close in white linen. A pillow of feathers was put beneath his head, and over all was laid a warm coverlet, wadded with fur. In this fashion the ancient nurse gave the babe to his father, who awaited him within the garden. Milon commended the child to his men, charging them to carry him loyally, by such towns as they knew, to that lady beyond the Humber. The servants set forth, bearing the infant with them. Seven times a day they reposed them in their journey, so that the women might nourish the babe, and bathe and tend him duly. They served their lord so faithfully, keeping such watch upon the way, that at the last they won to the lady to whom they were bidden. The lady received them courteously, as became her breeding. She broke the seal of the letter, and when she was assured of what was therein, marvelously she cherished the infant. These having bestowed the boy in accordance with their lord's commandment, returned to their own land.

Milon went forth from his realm to serve beyond the seas for guerdon. His friend remained within her house and was granted by her father in marriage to a right rich baron of that country. Though this baron was a worthy knight, justly esteemed of all his fellows, the damsel was grieved beyond measure when she knew her father's will. She called to mind the past, and regretted that Milon had gone from the country, since he would have helped her in her need.

"Alas!" said the lady, "what shall I do? I doubt that I am lost, for my lord will find that his bride is not a maid. If this becomes known they will make me a bondwoman for all my days. Would that my friend were here to free me from this coil. It were good for me to die rather than to live, but by no means can I escape from their hands. They have set warders about me, men, old and young, whom they call my chamberlains, contempters of love, who delight themselves in sadness. But endure it I must, for, alas, I know not how to die."

So on the appointed day the lady was wedded to the baron, and her husband took her to dwell with him in hisief.

When Milon returned to his own country he was right heavy and sorrowful to learn of this marriage. He lamented his wretched case, but in this he found comfort, that he was not far from the realm where the lady abode whom so tenderly he loved. Milon commenced to think within himself how best he might send letters to the damsel that he was come again to his home, yet so that none should have knowledge thereof. He wrote a letter, and sealed it with his seal. This message he made fast to the neck, and hid within the plumage of a swan that was long his, and was greatly to his heart. He bade his squire to come, and made him his messenger.

"Change thy raiment swiftly," said he, "and hasten to the castle of my friend. Take with thee my swan, and see that none, neither

servant nor handmaid, delivers the bird to my lady, save thyself alone."

The squire did according to his lord's commandment. He made him ready quickly, and went forth, bearing the swan with him. He went by the nearest road, and passing through the streets of the city, came before the portal of the castle. In answer to his summons the porter drew near.

"Friend," said he, "hearken to me. I am of Caerleon, and a fowler by craft. Within my nets I have snared the most marvellous swan in the world. This wondrous bird I would bestow forthwith upon your lady, but perforce I must offer her the gift with my own hand."

"Friend," replied the porter, "fowlers are not always welcomed of ladies. If you come with me I will bring you where I may know whether it pleases my lady to have speech with you and to receive your gift."

The porter entered in the hall, where he found none but two lords seated at a great table, playing chess for their delight. He swiftly returned on his steps, and the fowler with him, so furtively withal that the lords were not disturbed at their game, nor perceived aught of the matter. They went therefore to the chamber of the lady. In answer to their call the door was opened to them by a maiden, who led them before her dame. When the swan was proffered to the lady it pleased her to receive the gift. She summoned a varlet of her household and gave the bird to his charge, commanding him to keep it safely, and to see that it ate enough and to spare.

"Lady," said the servitor, "I will do your bidding. We shall never receive from any fowler on earth such another bird as this. The swan is fit to serve at a royal table, for the bird is plump as he is fair."

The varlet put the swan in his lady's hands. She took the bird kindly, and smoothing his head and neck, felt the letter that was hidden beneath its feathers. The blood pricked in her veins, for well she knew that the writing was sent her by her friend. She caused the fowler to be given of her bounty, and bade the men to go forth from her chamber. When they had parted the lady called a maiden to her aid. She broke the seal, and unfastening the letter, came upon the name of Milon at the head. She kissed the name a hundred times through her tears. When she might read the writing she learned of the great pain and dolour that her lover suffered by day and by night. In you—he wrote—is all my pleasure, and in your white hands it lies to heal me or to slay. Strive to find a plan by which we may speak as friend to friend, if you would have me live. The knight prayed her in his letter to send him an answer by means of the swan. If the bird were well guarded, and kept without provand for three days, he would of a surety fly back to the place from whence he came, with any message that the lady might lace about his neck.

When the damsel had considered the writing, and understood what was put therein, she commanded that her bird should be tended carefully, and given plenteously to eat and to drink. She held him for a month within her chamber, but this was less from choice, than for the craft that was necessary to obtain the ink and parchment requisite for her writing. At the end she wrote a letter according to her heart, and sealed it with her ring. The lady caused the swan to fast for three full days; then having concealed the message about his neck, let him take his flight. The bird was all unhungered for food, and remembering well the home from which he drew, he returned thither as quickly as his wings might bear him.

He knew again his town, and his master's house, and descended to the ground at Milon's very feet. Milon rejoiced greatly when he marked his own. He caught the bird by his wings, and crying for his steward, bade him give the swan to eat. The knight removed the missive from the messenger's neck. He glanced from head to head of the letter, seeking the means that he hoped to find, and the salutation he so tenderly wished. Sweet to his heart was the writing, for the lady wrote that without him there was no joy in her life, and since it was his desire to hear by the swan, it would be her pleasure also.

For twenty years the swan was made the messenger of these two lovers, who might never win together. There was no speech between them, save that carried by the bird. They caused the swan

to fast for three days, and then sent him on his errand. He to whom the letter came, saw to it that the messenger was fed to heart's desire. Many a time the swan went upon his journey, for however strictly the lady was held of her husband, there was none who had suspicion of a bird.

The dame beyond the Humber nourished and tended the boy committed to her charge with the greatest care. When he was come to a fitting age she made him to be knighted of her lord, for goodly and serviceable was the lad. On the same day the aunt read over to him the letter, and put in his hand the ring. She told him the name of his mother, and his father's story. In all the world there was no worthier knight, nor a more chivalrous and gallant gentleman. The lad hearkened diligently to the lady's tale. He rejoiced greatly to hear of his father's prowess, and was proud beyond measure of his renown. He considered within himself, saying to his own heart, that much should be required of his father's son, and that he would not be worthy of his blood if he did not endeavour to merit his name. He determined therefore that he would leave his country, and seek adventure as a knight errant, beyond the sea. The varlet delayed no longer than the evening. On the morrow he bade farewell to his aunt, who having warned and admonished him for his good, gave him largely of her wealth, to bring him on his way. He rode to Southampton, that he might find a ship equipped for sea, and so came to Barfleur. Without any tarrying the lad went straight to Brittany, where he spent his money and himself in feasts and in tourneys. The rich men of the land were glad of his friendship, for there was none who bore himself better in the press with spear or with sword. What he took from the rich he bestowed on such knights as were poor and luckless. These loved him greatly, since he gained largely and spent freely, granting of his wealth to all. Wherever this knight sojourned in the realm he bore away the prize. So debonair was he and chivalrous that his fame and praise crossed the water, and were noised abroad in his own land. Folk told how a certain knight from beyond the Humber, who had passed the sea in quest of wealth and honour, had so done, that by reason of his prowess, his liberality, and his modesty, men called him the Knight Peerless, since they did not know his name.

This praise of the good knight, and of his deeds, came to be heard of Milon. Very dolent was he and sorely troubled that so young a knight should be esteemed above his fathers. He marvelled greatly that the stout spears of the past had not put on their harness and broken a lance for their ancient honour. One thing he determined, that he would cross the sea without delay, so that he might joust with the dansellon, and abate his pride. In wrath and anger he purposed to fight, to beat his adversary from the saddle, and bring him at last to shame. After this was ended he would seek his son, of whom he had heard nothing, since he had gone from his aunt's castle. Milon caused his friend to know of his wishes. He opened out to her all his thought, and craved her permission to depart. This letter he sent by the swan, commending the bird to her care.

When the lady heard of her lover's purpose, she thanked him for his courtesy, for greatly was his counsel to her mind. She approved his desire to quit the realm for the sake of his honour, and far from putting let and hindrance in his path, trusted that in the end he would bring again her son. Since Milon was assured of his friend's goodwill, he arrayed himself richly, and crossing the sea to Normandy, came afterwards into the land of the Bretons. There he sought the friendship of the lords of that realm, and fared to all the tournaments of which he might hear. Milon bore himself proudly, and gave graciously of his wealth, as though he were receiving a gift. He sojourned till the winter was past in that land, he, and a brave company of knights whom he held in his house with him. When Easter had come, and the season that men give to tourneys and wars and the righting of their private wrongs, Milon considered how he could meet with the knight whom men called Peerless. At that time a tournament was proclaimed to be held at Mont St. Michel. Many a Norman and Breton rode to the game; knights of Flanders and of France were there in plenty, but few fared from England. Milon drew to the lists amongst the first. He inquired diligently of the young champion, and all men were ready to tell from whence he came, and of his harness, and of the

blazon on his shield. At length the knight appeared in the lists and Milon looked upon the adversary he so greatly desired to see. Now in this tournament a knight could joust with that lord who was set over against him, or he could seek to break a lance with his chosen foe. A player must gain or lose, and he might find himself opposed either by his comrade or his enemy. Milon did well and worshipfully in the press, and was praised of many that day. But the Knight Peerless carried the cry from all his fellows, for none might stand before him, nor rival him in skill and address. Milon observed him curiously. The lad struck so heavily, he thrust home so shrewdly, that Milon's hatred changed to envy as he watched. Very comely showed the varlet, and much to Milon's mind. The older knight set himself over against the champion, and they met together in the centre of the field. Milon struck his adversary so fiercely, that the lance splintered in his gauntlet; but the young knight kept his seat without even losing a stirrup. In return his spear was aimed with such cunning that he bore his antagonist to the ground. Milon lay upon the earth bareheaded, for his helmet was unlaced in the shock. His hair and beard showed white to all, and the varlet was heavy to look on him whom he had overthrown. He caught the destrier by the bridle, and led him before the stricken man.

"Sir," said he, "I pray you to get upon your horse. I am right grieved and vexed that I should have done this wrong. Believe me that it was wrought unwittingly."

Milon sprang upon his steed. He approved the courtesy of his adversary, and looking upon the hand that held his bridle, he knew again his ring. He made inquiry of the lad.

"Friend," said he, "hearken to me. Tell me now the name of thy sire. How art thou called; who is thy mother? I have seen much, and gone to and fro about the world. All my life I have journeyed from realm to realm, by reason of tourneys and quarrels and princes' wars, yet never once by any knight have I been borne from my horse. This day I am overthrown by a boy, and yet I cannot help but love thee."

The varlet answered, "I know little of my father. I understand that his name is Milon, and that he was a knight of Wales. He loved the daughter of a rich man, and was loved again. My mother bore me in secret, and caused me to be carried to Northumberland, where I was taught and tended. An old aunt was at the costs of my nourishing. She kept me at her side, till of all her gifts she gave me horse and arms, and sent me here, where I have remained. In hope and wish I purpose to cross the sea, and return to my own realm. There I would seek out my father, and learn how it stands between him and my mother. I will show him my golden ring, and I will tell him of such privy matters that he may not deny our kinship, but must love me as a son, and ever hold me dear."

When Milon heard these words he could endure them no further. He got him swiftly from his horse, and taking the lad by the fringe of his hauberk, he cried, "Praise be to God, for now am I healed. Fair friend, by my faith thou art my very son, for whom I came forth from my own land, and have sought through all this realm."

The varlet climbed from the saddle, and stood upon his feet. Father and son kissed each other tenderly, with many comfortable words. Their love was fair to see, and those who looked upon their meeting, wept for joy and pity.

Milon and his son departed from the tournament so soon as it came to an end, for the knight desired greatly to speak to the varlet at leisure, and to open before him all his mind. They rode to their hostel, and with the knights of their fellowship, passed the hours in mirth and revelry. Milon spoke to the lad of his mother. He told him of their long love, and how she was given by her father in marriage to a baron of his realm. He rehearsed the years of separation, accepted by both with a good heart, and of the messenger who carried letters between them, when there was none they dared to trust in, save only the swan.

The son made answer,

"In faith, fair father, let us return to our own land. There I will slay this husband, and you shall yet be my mother's lord."

This being accorded between them, on the morrow they made them ready for the journey, and bidding farewell to their friends, set forth for Wales. They embarked in a propitious hour, for a

fair wind carried the ship right swiftly to its haven. They had not ridden far upon their road, when they met a certain squire of the lady's household on his way to Brittany, bearing letters to Milon. His task was done long before sundown in chancing on the knight. He gave over the sealed writing with which he was charged, praying the knight to hasten to his friend without any tarrying, since her husband was in his grave. Milon rejoiced greatly when he knew this thing. He showed the message to his son, and pressed forward without pause or rest. They made such speed, that at the end they came to the castle where the lady had her lodging. Light of heart was she when she clasped again her child. These two fond lovers sought neither countenance of their kin, nor counsel of any man. Their son handselled them together, and gave the mother to his sire. From the day they were wed they dwelt in wealth and in sweetness to the end of their lives.

Of their love and content the minstrel wrought this Lay. I, also, who have set it down in writing, have won guerdon enough just by telling over the tale.

THE LAY OF YONEC

Since I have commenced I would not leave any of these Lays untold. The stories that I know I would tell you forthwith. My hope is now to rehearse to you the story of Yonec, the son of Eudemarec, his mother's first born child.

In days of yore there lived in Britain a rich man, old and full of years, who was lord of the town and realm of Chepstow. This town is builded on the banks of the Douglas, and is renowned by reason of many ancient sorrows which have there befallen. When he was well stricken in years this lord took to himself a wife, that he might have children to come after him in his goodly heritage. The damsel, who was bestowed on this wealthy lord, came of an honourable house, and was kind and courteous, and passing fair. She was beloved by all because of her beauty, and none was more sweetly spoken of from Chepstow to Lincoln, yea, or from there to Ireland. Great was their sin who married the maiden to this aged man. Since she was young and gay, he shut her fast within his tower, that he might the easier keep her to himself. He set in charge of the damsel his elder sister, a widow, to hold her more surely in ward. These two ladies dwelt alone in the tower, together with their women, in a chamber by themselves. There the damsel might have speech of none, except at the bidding of the ancient dame. More than seven years passed in this fashion. The lady had no children for her solace, and she never went forth from the castle to greet her kinsfolk and her friends. Her husband's jealousy was such that when she sought her bed, no chamberlain or usher was permitted in her chamber to light the candles. The lady became passing heavy. She spent her days in sighs and tears. Her loveliness began to fail, for she gave no thought to her person. Indeed at times she hated the very shadow of that beauty which had spoiled all her life.

Now when April had come with the gladness of the birds, this lord rose early on a day to take his pleasure in the woods. He bade his sister to rise from her bed to make the doors fast behind him. She did his will, and going apart, commenced to read the psalter that she carried in her hand. The lady awoke, and shamed the brightness of the sun with her tears. She saw that the old woman was gone forth from the chamber, so she made her complaint without fear of being overheard.

"Alas," said she, "in an ill hour was I born. My lot is hard to be shut in this tower, never to go out till I am carried to my grave. Of whom is this jealous lord fearful that he holds me so fast in prison? Great is a man's folly always to have it in mind that he may be deceived. I cannot go to church, nor hearken to the service of God. If I might talk to folk, or have a little pleasure in my life, I should show the more tenderness to my husband, as is my wish. Very greatly are my parents and my kin to blame for giving me to this jealous old man, and making us one flesh. I cannot even look to become a widow, for he will never die. In place of the waters of baptism, certainly he was plunged in the flood of the Styx. His nerves are like iron, and his veins quick with blood as those of a young man. Often have I heard that in years gone by things chanced to the sad, which brought their sorrows to an end.

A knight would meet with a maiden, fresh and fair to his desire. Damsels took to themselves lovers, discreet and brave, and were blamed of none. Moreover since these ladies were not seen of any, except their friends, who was there to count them blameworthy! Perchance I deceive myself, and in spite of all the tales, such adventures happened to none. Ah, if only the mighty God would but shape the world to my wish!"

When the lady had made her plaint, as you have known, the shadow of a great bird darkened the narrow window, so that she marvelled what it might mean. This falcon flew straightway into the chamber, jessed and hooded from the glove, and came where the dame was seated. Whilst the lady yet wondered upon him, the tercel became a young and comely knight before her eyes. The lady marvelled exceedingly at this sorcery. Her blood turned to water within her, and because of her dread she hid her face in her hands. By reason of his courtesy the knight first sought to persuade her to put away her fears.

"Lady," said he, "be not so fearful. To you this hawk shall be as gentle as a dove. If you will listen to my words I will strive to make plain what may now be dark. I have come in this shape to your tower that I may pray you of your tenderness to make of me your friend. I have loved you for long, and in my heart have esteemed your love above anything in the world. Save for you I have never desired wife or maid, and I shall find no other woman desirable, until I die. I should have sought you before, but I might not come, nor even leave my own realm, till you called me in your need. Lady, in charity, take me as your friend."

The lady took heart and courage whilst she hearkened to these words. Presently she uncovered her face, and made answer. She said that perchance she would be willing to give him again his hope, if only she had assurance of his faith in God. This she said because of her fear, but in her heart she loved him already by reason of his great beauty. Never in her life had she beheld so goodly a youth, nor a knight more fair.

"Lady," he replied, "you ask rightly. For nothing that man can give would I have you doubt my faith and affiance. I believe truly in God, the Maker of all, who redeemed us from the woe brought on us by our father Adam, in the eating of that bitter fruit. This God is and was and ever shall be the life and light of us poor sinful men. If you still give no credence to my word, ask for your chaplain; tell him that since you are sick you greatly desire to hear the Service appointed by God to heal the sinner of his wound. I will take your semblance, and receive the Body of the Lord. You will thus be certified of my faith, and never have reason to mistrust me more."

When the sister of that ancient lord returned from her prayers to the chamber, she found that the lady was awake. She told her that since it was time to get her from bed, she would make ready her vesture. The lady made answer that she was sick, and begged her to warn the chaplain, for greatly she feared that she might die. The aged dame replied,

"You must endure as best you may, for my lord has gone to the woods, and none will enter in the tower, save me."

Right distressed was the lady to hear these words. She called a woman's wiles to her aid, and made seeming to swoon upon her bed. This was seen by the sister of her lord, and much was she dismayed. She set wide the doors of the chamber, and summoned the priest. The chaplain came as quickly as he was able, carrying with him the Lord's Body. The knight received the Gift, and drank of the Wine of that chalice; then the priest went his way, and the old woman made fast the door behind him.

The knight and the lady were greatly at their ease; a comelier and a blither pair were never seen. They had much to tell one to the other, but the hours passed till it was time for the knight to go again to his own realm. He prayed the dame to give him leave to depart, and she sweetly granted his prayer, yet so only that he promised to return often to her side.

"Lady," he made answer, "so you please to require me at any hour, you may be sure that I shall hasten at your pleasure. But I beg you to observe such measure in the matter, that none may do us wrong. This old woman will spy upon us night and day, and if she observes our friendship, will certainly show it to her lord.

Should this evil come upon us, for both it means separation, and for me, most surely, death."

The knight returned to his realm, leaving behind him the happiest lady in the land. On the morrow she rose sound and well, and went lightly through the week. She took such heed to her person, that her former beauty came to her again. The tower that she was wont to hate as her prison, became to her now as a pleasant lodging, that she would not leave for any abode and garden on earth. There she could see her friend at will, when once her lord had gone forth from the chamber. Early and late, at morn and eve, the lovers met together. God grant her joy was long, against the evil day that came.

The husband of the lady presently took notice of the change in his wife's fashion and person. He was troubled in his soul, and misdoubting his sister, took her apart to reason with her on a day. He told her of his wonder that his dame arrayed her so sweetly, and inquired what this should mean. The crone answered that she knew no more than he, "for we have very little speech one with another. She sees neither kin nor friend; but, now, she seems quite content to remain alone in her chamber."

The husband made reply, "Doubtless she is content, and well content. But by my faith, we must do all we may to discover the cause. Harken to me. Some morning when I have risen from bed, and you have shut the doors upon me, make pretence to go forth, and let her think herself alone. You must hide yourself in a privy place, where you can both hear and see. We shall then learn the secret of this new found joy."

Having devised this snare the twain went their ways. Alas, for those who were innocent of their counsel, and whose feet would soon be tangled in the net.

Three days after, this husband pretended to go forth from his house. He told his wife that the King had bidden him by letters to his Court, but that he should return speedily. He went from the chamber, making fast the door. His sister arose from her bed, and hid behind her curtains, where she might see and hear what so greedily she desired to know. The lady could not sleep, so fervently she wished for her friend. The knight came at her call, but he might not tarry, nor cherish her more than one single hour. Great was the joy between them, both in word and tenderness, till he could no longer stay. All this the crone saw with her eyes, and stored in her heart. She watched the fashion in which he came, and the guise in which he went. But she was altogether fearful and amazed that so goodly a knight should wear the semblance of a hawk. When the husband returned to his house—for he was near at hand—his sister told him that of which she was the witness, and of the truth concerning the knight. Right heavy was he and wrathful. Straightway he contrived a cunning gin for the slaying of this bird. He caused four blades of steel to be fashioned, with point and edge sharper than the keenest razor. These he fastened firmly together, and set them securely within that window, by which the tercel would come to his lady. Ah, God, that a knight so fair might not see nor hear of this wrong, and that there should be none to show him of such treason.

On the morrow the husband arose very early, at daybreak, saying that he should hunt within the wood. His sister made the doors fast behind him, and returned to her bed to sleep, because it was yet but dawn. The lady lay awake, considering of the knight whom she loved so loyally. Tenderly she called him to her side. Without any long tarrying the bird came flying at her will. He flew in at the open window, and was entangled amongst the blades of steel. One blade pierced his body so deeply, that the red blood gushed from the wound. When the falcon knew that his hurt was to death, he forced himself to pass the barrier, and coming before his lady fell upon her bed, so that the sheets were dabbled with his blood. The lady looked upon her friend and his wound, and was altogether anguished and distraught.

"Sweet friend," said the knight, "it is for you that my life is lost. Did I not speak truly that if our loves were known, very surely I should be slain?"

On hearing these words the lady's head fell upon the pillow, and for a space she lay as she were dead. The knight cherished her sweetly. He prayed her not to sorrow overmuch, since she should bear a son who would be her exceeding comfort. His name should

be called Yonec. He would prove a valiant knight, and would avenge both her and him by slaying their enemy. The knight could stay no longer, for he was bleeding to death from his hurt. In great dolour of mind and body he flew from the chamber. The lady pursued the bird with many shrill cries. In her desire to follow him she sprang forth from the window. Marvellously it was that she was not killed outright, for the window was fully twenty feet from the ground. When the lady made her perilous leap she was clad only in her shift. Dressed in this fashion she set herself to follow the knight by the drops of blood which dripped from his wound. She went along the road that he had gone before, till she lighted on a little lodge. This lodge had but one door, and it was stained with blood. By the marks on the lintel she knew that Eudemarec had refreshed him in the hut, but she could not tell whether he was yet within. The damsel entered in the lodge, but all was dark, and since she might not find him, she came forth, and pursued her way. She went so far that at the last the lady came to a very fair meadow. She followed the track of blood across this meadow, till she saw a city near at hand. This fair city was altogether shut in with high walls. There was no house, nor hall, nor tower, but shone bright as silver, so rich were the folk who dwelt therein. Before the town lay a still water. To the right spread a leafy wood, and on the left hand, near by the keep, ran a clear river. By this broad stream the ships drew to their anchorage, for there were above three hundred lying in the haven. The lady entered in the city by the postern gate. The gout of freshly fallen blood led her through the streets to the castle. None challenged her entrance to the city; none asked of her business in the streets; she passed neither man nor woman upon her way. Spots of red blood lay on the staircase of the palace. The lady entered and found herself within a low ceiled room, where a knight was sleeping on a pallet. She looked upon his face and passed beyond. She came within a larger room, empty, save for one lonely couch, and for the knight who slept thereon. But when the lady entered in the third chamber she saw a stately bed, that well she knew to be her friend's. This bed was of inwrought gold, and was spread with silken cloths beyond price. The furniture was worth the ransom of a city, and waxen torches in sconces of silver lighted the chamber, burning night and day. Swiftly as the lady had come she knew again her friend, directly she saw him with her eyes. She hastened to the bed, and incontinently swooned for grief. The knight clasped her in his arms, bewailing his wretched lot, but when she came to her mind, he comforted her as sweetly as he might.

"Fair friend, for God's love I pray you get from hence as quickly as you are able. My time will end before the day, and my household, in their wrath, may do you a mischief if you are found in the castle. They are persuaded that by reason of your love I have come to my death. Fair friend, I am right heavy and sorrowful because of you."

The lady made answer, "Friend, the best thing that can befall me is that we shall die together. How may I return to my husband? If he finds me again he will certainly slay me with the sword."

The knight consoled her as he could. He bestowed a ring upon his friend, teaching her that so long as she wore the gift, her husband would think of none of these things, nor care for her person, nor seek to revenge him for his wrongs. Then he took his sword and rendered it to the lady, conjuring her by their great love, never to give it to the hand of any, till their son should be counted a brave and worthy knight. When that time was come she and her lord would go—together with the son—to a feast. They would lodge in an Abbey, where should be seen a very fair tomb. There her son must be told of this death; there he must be girt with this sword. In that place shall be rehearsed the tale of his birth, and his father, and all this bitter wrong. And then shall be seen what he will do.

When the knight had shown his friend all that was in his heart, he gave her a bliaut, passing rich, that she might clothe her body, and get her from the palace. She went her way, according to his command, bearing with her the ring, and the sword that was her most precious treasure. She had not gone half a mile beyond the gate of the city when she heard the clash of bells, and the cries of men who lamented the death of their lord. Her grief was such that she fell four separate times upon the road, and four times she came from out her swoon. She bent her steps to the lodge where

her friend had refreshed him, and rested for awhile. Passing beyond she came at last to her own land, and returned to her husband's tower. There, for many a day, she dwelt in peace, since—as Eudemarec foretold—her lord gave no thought to her outgoings, nor wished to avenge him, neither spied upon her any more.

In due time the lady was delivered of a son, whom she named Yonec. Very sweetly nurtured was the lad. In all the realm there was not his like for beauty and generosity, nor one more skilled with the spear. When he was of a fitting age the King dubbed him knight. Harken now, what chanced to them all, that self-same year.

It was the custom of that country to keep the feast of St. Aaron with great pomp at Caerleon, and many another town besides. The husband rode with his friends to observe the festival, as was his wont. Together with him went his wife and her son, richly apparelled. As the roads were not known of the company, and they feared to lose their way, they took with them a certain youth to lead them in the straight path. The varlet brought them to a town; in all the world was none so fair. Within this city was a mighty Abbey, filled with monks in their holy habit. The varlet craved a lodging for the night, and the pilgrims were welcomed gladly of the monks, who gave them meat and drink near by the Abbot's table. On the morrow, after Mass, they would have gone their way, but the Abbot prayed them to tarry for a little, since he would show them his chapter house and dormitory, and all the offices of the Abbey. As the Abbot had sheltered them so courteously, the husband did according to his wish.

Immediately that the dinner had come to an end, the pilgrims rose from table, and visited the offices of the Abbey. Coming to the chapter house they entered therein, and found a fair tomb, exceeding great, covered with a silken cloth, banded with orfrees of gold. Twenty torches of wax stood around this rich tomb, at the head, the foot, and the sides. The candlesticks were of fine gold, and the censer swung in that chantry was fashioned from an amethyst. When the pilgrims saw the great reverence vouchsafed to this tomb, they inquired of the guardians as to whom it should belong, and of the lord who lay therein. The monks commenced to weep, and told with tears, that in that place was laid the body of the best, the bravest, and the fairest knight who ever was, or ever should be born. "In his life he was King of this realm, and never was there so worshipful a lord. He was slain at Caerwent for the love of a lady of those parts. Since then the country is without a King. Many a day have we waited for the son of these luckless lovers to come to our land, even as our lord commanded us to do."

When the lady heard these words she cried to her son with a loud voice before them all.

"Fair son," said she, "you have heard why God has brought us to this place. It is your father who lies dead within this tomb. Foully was he slain by this ancient Judas at your side."

With these words she plucked out the sword, and tendered him the glaive that she had guarded for so long a season. As swiftly as she might she told the tale of how Eudemarec came to have speech with his friend in the guise of a hawk; how the bird was betrayed to his death by the jealousy of her lord; and of Yonec the falcon's son. At the end she fell senseless across the tomb, neither did she speak any further word until the soul had gone from her body. When the son saw that his mother lay dead upon her lover's grave, he raised his father's sword and smote the head of that ancient traitor from his shoulders. In that hour he avenged his father's death, and with the same blow gave quittance for the wrongs of his mother. As soon as these tidings were published abroad, the folk of that city came together, and setting the body of that fair lady within a coffin, sealed it fast, and with due rite and worship placed it beside the body of her friend. May God grant them pardon and peace. As to Yonec, their son, the people acclaimed him for their lord, as he departed from the church.

Those who knew the truth of this piteous adventure, after many days shaped it to a Lay, that all men might learn the plaint and the dolour that these two friends suffered by reason of their love.

THE LAY OF THE THORN

Whosoever counts these Lays as fable, may be assured that I am not of his mind. The dead and past stories that I have told again in divers fashions, are not set down without authority. The chronicles of these far off times are yet preserved in the land. They may be read by the curious at Caerleon, or in the monastery of St. Aaron. They may be heard in Brittany, and in many another realm besides. To prove how the remembrance of such tales endures, I will now relate to you the adventure of the Two Children, making clear what has remained hidden to this very hour.

In Brittany there lived a prince, high of spirit, fair of person, courteous and kind to all. This Child was a King's son, and there were none to cherish him but his father and his father's wife, for his mother was dead. The King held him dearer than aught else in the world, and close he was to the lady's heart. The lady, for her part, had a daughter by another husband than the King. Very dainty was the maiden, sweet of colour and of face, passing young and fair. Both these children, born to so high estate, were right tender of age, for the varlet, who was the elder of the twain, was but seven years. The two children loved together very sweetly. Nothing seemed of worth to one, if it were not shared with the other. They were nourished at the same table, went their ways together, and lived side by side. The guardians who held them in ward, seeing their great love, made no effort to put them apart, but allowed them to have all things in common. The love of these children increased with their years, but Dame Nature brought another love to youth and maid than she gave to the child. They delighted no more in their old frolic and play. Such sport gave place to clasp and kisses, to many words, and to long silences. To savour their friendship they took refuge in an attic of the keep, but all the years they had passed together, made the new love flower more sweetly in their hearts, as each knew well. Very pure and tender was their love, and good would it have been if they could have hidden it from their fellows. This might not be, for in no great while they were spied upon, and seen.

It chanced upon a day that this prince, so young and debonaire, came home from the river with an aching head, by reason of the heat. He entered in a chamber, and shutting out the noise and clamour, lay upon his bed, to ease his pain. The Queen was with her daughter in a chamber, instructing her meely in that which it becomes a maid to know. Closer to a damsel's heart is her lover than her kin. So soon as she heard that her friend was come again to the house, she stole forth from her mother, without saying word to any, and accompanied by none, went straight to the chamber where he slept. The prince welcomed her gladly, for they had not met together that day. The lady, who thought no wrong, consoled with him in his sickness, and of her sweetness gave him a hundred kisses to soothe his hurt. Too swiftly sped the time in this fashion. Presently the Queen noticed that the damsel was no longer with her at her task. She rose to her feet, and going quickly to the chamber of the prince, entered therein without call or knock, for the door was unfastened on the latch. When the Queen saw these two lovers fondly laced in each other's arms, she knew and was certified of their love. Right wrathful was the Queen. She caught the maiden by the wrist, and shut her fast in her room. She prayed the King to govern his son more strictly, and to hold him in such ward about the Court that he might get no speech with the damsel. Since he could have neither sight nor word of his friend, save only the sound of weeping from her chamber, the prince determined to tarry no further in the palace. He sought his father the self-same hour, and showed him what was in his mind.

"Sire," said he, "I crave a gift. If it pleases you to be a father to your son, make me now a knight. I desire to seek another realm, and to serve some prince for guerdon. The road calls me, for many a knight has won much riches with his sword."

The King did not refuse the lad's request, but accorded it should be even as he wished. He prayed the prince to dwell for a year about the Court, that he might the more readily assist at such tourneys and follow such feats of arms as were proclaimed in the kingdom. This the prince agreed to do—the more readily because there was nothing else to be done. He remained therefore at the Court, moving ever by his father's side. The maiden, for her part,

was in the charge of her mother, who reproached her always for that she had done amiss. The Queen did not content herself with reproaches and threats. She used the sharp discipline upon her, so that the maiden suffered grievously in her person. Sick at heart was the varlet whilst he hearkened to the beatings, the discipline and the chastisement wherewith her mother corrected the damsel. He knew not what to do, for well he understood that his was the fault, and that by reason of him was her neck bowed down in her youth. More and more was he tormented because of his friend.

More and more the stripes with which she was afflicted became heavier for him to bear. He shut himself close within his chamber, and making fast the door, gave his heart over to tears.

"Alas," cried he, "what shall I do! How may the ill be cured that I have brought on us by my lightness and folly! I love her more than life, and, certes, if I may not have my friend I will prove that I can die for her, though I cannot live without her."

Whilst the prince made this lamentation, the Queen came before the King.

"Sir," said she, "I pledge my oath and word as a crowned lady that I keep my daughter as strictly as I may. Think to your own son, and see to it that he cannot set eyes on the maid. He considers none other thing but how to get clasp and speech of his friend."

For this reason the King guarded his son about the Court as closely as the Queen held the maiden in her chamber. So vigilant was the watch that these pitiful lovers might never have word together. They had no leisure to meet; they never looked one on the other; nor heard tidings of how they did, whether by letter or by sergeant.

They lived this death in life till the same year—eight days before the Feast of St. John—the varlet was dubbed knight. The King spent the day in the chase, and returning, brought with him great store of fowl and venison that he had taken. After supper, when the tables were removed, the King seated himself for his delight upon a carpet spread before the dais, his son and many a courteous lord with him. The fair company gave ear to the Lay of Alys, sweetly sung by a minstrel from Ireland, to the music of his rote. When his story was ended, forthwith he commenced another, and related the Lay of Orpheus; none being so bold as to disturb the singer, or to let his mind wander from the song. Afterwards the knights spoke together amongst themselves. They told of adventures which in ancient days had chanced to many, and were noised about Brittany. Amongst these lords sat a damsel, passing sweet of tongue. In her turn she told of a certain adventure which awaited the adventurous at the Ford of the Thorn, once every year, on the vigil of St. John, "but much I doubt whether now there be knights so bold as to dare the perils of that passage." When the newly made knight heard these words his pride quickened within him. He considered that although he was belted with the sword, he had as yet done no deed to prove his courage in the eyes of men. He deemed the time had come to show his hardihood, and to put to silence the malicious lips. He stood upon his feet, calling upon damsel, King and barons to hearken to his voice, and spake out manfully in the ears of great and small.

"Lords," cried he, "whatever says the maiden, I boast before you all that on St. John's Eve I will ride alone to the Ford of the Thorn, and dare this adventure, whether it bring me gain or whether it bring me loss."

The King was right heavy to hear these words. He thought them to be the gab and idle speech of a boy.

"Fair son," said he, "put this folly from your mind."

But when the King was persuaded that whether it were foolishness or wisdom the lad was determined to go his way, and abide the issue of the adventure,

"Go swiftly," said he, "in the care of God. Since risk your life you must, play it boldly like a pawn, and may God grant you heart's desire and happy hours."

The self-same night, whilst the lad lay sleeping in his bed, that fair lady, his friend, was in much unrest in hers. The tidings of her lover's boast had been carried quickly to her chamber, and sorely was she adread for what might chance. When the Eve of St. John was come, and the day drew towards evening, the varlet, with all fair hopes, made him ready to ride to the Ford Adventurous. He had clad himself from basnet to shoes in steel, and mounted on a

strong destrier, went his road to essay the Passage of the Thorn. Whilst he took his path the maiden took hers. She went furtively to the orchard, that she might importune God to bring her friend again, safe and sound to his own house. She seated herself on the roots of a tree, and with sighs and tears lamented her piteous case.

"Father of Heaven," said the girl, "Who was and ever shall be, be pitiful to my prayer. Since it is not to Thy will that any man should be wretched, be merciful to a most unhappy maid. Fair Sire, give back the days that are gone, when my friend was at my side, and grant that once again I may be with him. Lord God of Hosts, when shall I be healed? None knows the bitterness of my sorrow, for none may taste thereof, save such as set their heart on what they may not have. These only, Lord, know the wormwood and the gall."

Thus prayed the maiden, seated on the roots of that ancient tree, her feet upon the tender grass. At the time of her orisons much was she sought and inquired after in the palace, but none might find where she had hidden. The damsel herself was given over altogether to her love and her sorrow, and had no thought for anything, save for prayers and tears. The night wore through, and dawn already laced the sky, when she fell on a little slumber, in the tree where she was sheltered. She woke with a start, but returned to her sleep more deeply than before. She had not slept long, when herseemed she was ravished from the tree—but I cannot make this plain for I know no wizardry—to that Ford of the Thorn, where her friend and lover had repaired. The knight looked upon the sleeping maiden, and marvelled at so fair a sight. All adread was the lady when she came from her slumber, for she knew not where she lay, and wondered greatly. She covered her head by reason of her exceeding fear, but the knight consoled her courteously.

"Diva," said he, "there is no reason for terror. If you are an earthly woman, speaking with a mortal tongue, tell me your story. Tell me in what guise and manner you came so suddenly to this secret place."

The maiden began to be of more courage, till she remembered that she was no longer in the orchard of the castle. She inquired of the knight to what haunt she had come.

"Lady," he made answer, "you are laid at the Ford of the Thorn, where adventures chance to the seeker, sometimes greatly against the mind, and sometimes altogether according to the heart."

"Ah, dear God," cried the lady, "now shall I be made whole. Sir, look a little closer upon me, for I have been your friend. Thanks be to God, who so soon has heard my prayer."

This was the beginning of adventures which happened that night to the seeker. The maiden hastened to embrace her lover. He got him nimbly from his horse, and taking her softly between his arms, kissed her with more kisses than I can tell. Then they sat together beneath the thorn, and the damsel told how she fell asleep within that old tree in the pleasaunce, of how she was rapt from thence in her slumber, and of how, yet sleeping, he came upon her by the Ford. When the knight had hearkened to all that she had to say, he looked from her face, and glancing across the river, marked a lord, with lifted lance, riding to the ford. This knight wore harness of a fair vermeil colour, and bestrode a horse white of body, save for his two ears, which were red as the rider's mail. Slender of girdle was this knight, and he made no effort to enter the river, but drew rein upon the other side of the passage, and watched. The varlet said to his friend that it became his honour to essay some feats of arms with this adversary. He got to horse, and rode to the river, leaving the maiden beneath the thorn. Had she but found another horse at need, very surely would she have ridden to his aid. The two knights drew together as swiftly as their steeds could bear them. They thrust so shrewdly with the lance, that their shields were split and broken. The spears splintered in the gauntlet, and both champions were unhorsed by the shock, rolling on the sand; but nothing worse happened to them. Since they had neither squire nor companion to help them on their feet, they pained them grievously to get them from the ground. When they might climb upon their steeds, they hung again the buckler about the neck, and lowered their ashen spears. Passing heavy was the varlet, for shame that his friend had seen him thrown. The two champions met together in the onset, but the prince struck his adversary so cunningly with the lance, that the laces of his

buckler were broken, and the shield fell from his body. When the varlet saw this he rejoiced greatly, for he knew that the eyes of his friend were upon him. He pressed his quarrel right fiercely, and tumbling his foe from the saddle, seized his horse by the bridle.

The two knights passed the ford, and the prince feared sorely because of the skill and mightiness of his adversary. He could not doubt that if they fell upon him together he would perish at their hands. He put the thought from mind, for he would not suspect them of conduct so unbecoming to gentle knight, and so contrary to the laws of chivalry. If they desired some passage of arms, doubtless they would joust as gentlemen, and each for himself alone. When these three knights were mounted on their steeds, they crossed the ford with courtesy and order, each seeking to give precedence to his companion. Having come to the bank the stranger knights prayed the prince to run a course for their pleasure. He answered that it was his wish, too, and made him ready for the battle. The prince rejoiced greatly when he saw one of these two adversaries ride a little apart, that he might the more easily observe the combat. He was assured that he would suffer no felony at their hands. For their part the two knights were persuaded that they had to do with an errant who had ridden to the ford for no other gain than honour and praise. The two adversaries took their places within the lists. They lowered their lance, and covering their bodies with the shield, smote fiercely together. So rude was the shock that the staves of the spears were broken, and the strong destriers were thrown upon their haunches. Neither of the good knights had lost his saddle. Each of the combatants got him to his feet, and drawing the sword, pressed upon his fellow, till the blood began to flow. When the knight who judged this quarrel saw their prowess, he came near, and commanded that the battle should cease. The adversaries drew apart, and struck no further blow with the sword. Right courteously and with fair words he spake to the prince. "Friend," said the knight, "get to your horse, and break a lance with me. Then we can go in peace, for our time grows short. You must endure till the light be come if you hope to gain the prize. Do your devoir, valiantly, for should you chance to be thrown in this course, or slain by misadventure, you have lost your desire. None will ever hear of this adventure; all your life you will remain little and obscure. Your maiden will be led away by the victor, seated on the good Castilian horse you have gained by right of courage. Fight bravely. The trappings of the destrier are worth the spoil of a king's castle, and as for the horse himself he is the swiftest and the fairest in the world. Be not amazed that I tell you of these matters. I have watched you joust, and know you for a hardy knight and a gallant gentleman. Besides I stand to lose horse and harness equally with you."

The prince listened to these words, and accorded that the knight spoke wisely and well. He would willingly have taken counsel of the maiden, but first, as surely he knew, he must joust with this knight. He gathered the reins in his glove, and choosing a lance with an ashen staff, opposed himself to his adversary. The combatants met together so fiercely that the lance pierced the steel of the buckler; yet neither lost stirrup by the shock. When the prince saw this he smote the knight so shrewdly that he would have fallen from the saddle, had he not clung to the neck of his destrier. Of his courtesy the prince passed on, and refrained his hand until his enemy had recovered his seat. On his return he found the knight full ready to continue his devoir. Each of the champions plucked forth his sword, and sheltered him beneath his shield. They struck such mighty blows that the bucklers were hewn in pieces, but in spite of all they remained firm in the saddle. The maiden was aghast whilst she watched the *melee*. She had great fear for her friend, lest mischief should befall him, and she cried loudly to the knight that, for grace, he should give over this combat, and go his way. Very courteously was the knight, and meetly schooled in what was due to maidens. He saluted the damsel, and, together with his companion, rode straightway from the ford. The prince watched them pass for a little, then without further tarrying he went swiftly to the maiden, where, all fearful and trembling, she knelt beneath the thorn. The lady stood upon her feet as her lover drew near. She climbed behind him on the saddle, for well she knew that their pains were done. They fared so fast that when it was yet scarce day they came again to the palace. The King saw

them approach, and rejoiced greatly at his son's prowess; but at this he marvelled much, that he should return with the daughter of the Queen.

The self-same day of this homecoming—as I have heard tell—the King had summoned to Court his barons and vassals because of a certain quarrel betwixt two of his lords. This quarrel being accorded between them, and come to a fair end, the King related to that blithe company the story of this adventure. He told again that which you know, of how the prince defended the Ford, of the finding of the maiden beneath the thorn, of the mighty joust, and of that white horse which was taken from the adversary.

The prince both then and thereafter caused the horse to be entreated with the greatest care. He received the maiden to wife, and cherished her right tenderly. She, and the steed on which she would always ride, were his richest possessions. The destrier lived many years in much honour, but on a day when his master was taking the harness from his head, he fell and died forthwith.

Of the story which has been set before you the Bretons wrought a Lay. They did not call the song the Lay of the Ford, although the adventure took place at a river; neither have they named it The Lay of the Two Children. For good or ill the rhyme is known as the Lay of the Thorn. It begins well and endeth better, for these kisses find their fruition in marriage.

THE LAY OF GRAELEN

Now will I tell you the adventure of Graelent, even as it was told to me, for the Lay is sweet to hear, and the tune thereof lovely to bear in mind.

Graelent was born in Brittany of a gentle and noble house, very comely of person and very frank of heart. The King who held Brittany in that day, made mortal war upon his neighbours, and commanded his vassals to take arms in his quarrel. Amongst these came Graelent, whom the King welcomed gladly, and since he was a wise and hardy knight greatly was he honoured and cherished by the Court. So Graelent strove valiantly at tourney and at joust, and pained himself mightily to do the enemy all the mischief that he was able. The Queen heard tell the prowess of her knight, and loved him in her heart for reason of his feats of arms and of the good men spoke of him. So she called her chamberlain apart, and said, "Tell me truly, hast thou not often heard speak of that fair knight, Sir Graelent, whose praise is in all men's mouths?"

"Lady," answered the chamberlain, "I know him for a courteous gentleman, well spoken of by all."

"I would he were my friend," replied the lady, "for I am in much unrest because of him. Go thou, and bid him come to me, so he would be worthy of my love." "Passing gracious and rich is your gift, lady, and doubtless he will receive it with marvellous joy. Why, from here to Troy there is no priest even, however holy, who in looking on your face would not lose Heaven in your eyes."

Thereupon the chamberlain took leave of the Queen, and seeking Graelent within his lodging saluted him courteously, and gave him the message, praying him to come without delay to the palace.

"Go before, fair friend," answered the knight, "for I will follow you at once."

So when the chamberlain was gone Graelent caused his grey horse to be saddled, and mounting thereon, rode to the castle, attended by his squire. He descended without the hall, and passing before the King entered within the Queen's chamber. When the lady saw him she embraced him closely, and cherished and honoured him sweetly. Then she made the knight to be seated on a fair carpet, and to his face praised him for his exceeding comeliness. But he answered her very simply and courteously, saying nothing but what was seemly to be said. Then the Queen kept silence for a great while, considering whether she should require him to love her for the love of love; but at the last, made bold by passion, she asked if his heart was set on any maid or dame.

"Lady," said he, "I love no woman, for love is a serious business, not a jest. Out of five hundred who speak glibly of love, not one can spell the first letter of his name. With such it is idleness, or fullness of bread, or fancy, masking in the guise of love. Love requires of his servants chastity in thought, in word and in deed. If one of two lovers is loyal, and the other jealous and false, how may their

friendship last, for Love is slain! But sweetly and discreetly love passes from person to person, from heart to heart, or it is nothing worth. For what the lover would, that would the beloved; what she would ask of him that should he go before to grant. Without accord such as this, love is but a bond and a constraint. For above all things Love means sweetness, and truth, and measure; yea, loyalty to the loved one and to your word. And because of this I dare not meddle with so high a matter."

The Queen heard Graelent gladly, finding him so tripping of tongue, and since his words were wise and courteous, at the end she discovered to him her heart.

"Friend, Sir Graelent, though I am a wife, yet have I never loved my lord. But I love you very dearly, and what I have asked of you will you not go before to grant?"

"Lady," said he, "give me pity and forgiveness, but this may not be. I am the vassal of the King, and on my knees have pledged him loyalty and faith, and sworn to defend his life and honour. Never shall he have shame because of me."

With these words Sir Graelent took his leave of the Queen, and went his way.

Seeing him go in this fashion the Queen commenced to sigh. She was grieved in her heart, and knew not what to do. But whatever chanced she would not renounce her passion, so often she required his love by means of soft messages and costly gifts, but he refused them all. Then the Queen turned from love to hate, and the greatness of her passion became the measure of her wrath, for very evilly she spoke of Graelent to the King. So long as the war endured Graelent remained in that realm. He spent all that he had upon his company, for the King grudged wages to his men. The Queen persuaded the King to this, counselling him that by withholding the pay of the sergeants, Graelent might in no wise flee the country, nor take service with another lord. So at the end Graelent was wonderfully downcast, nor was it strange that he was sad, for there remained nothing which he might pledge, but one poor steed, and when this was gone, no horse had he to carry him from the country.

It was now the month of May, when the hours are long and warm. The burgess, with whom Graelent lodged, had risen early in the morning, and with his wife had gone to eat with neighbours in the town. No one was in the house except Graelent, no squire, nor archer, nor servant, save only the daughter of his host, a very courteous maid. When the hour for dinner was come she prayed the knight that they might sit at board together. But he had no heart for mirth, and seeking out his squire bade him bridle and saddle his horse, for he had no care to eat.

"I have no saddle," replied the squire.

"Friend," said the demoiselle, "I will lend you bridle and saddle as well."

So when the harness was done upon him, Graelent mounted his horse, and went his way through the town, clad in a cloak of sorry fur, which he had worn overlong already. The townsfolk in the street turned and stared upon him, making a jest of his poverty, but of their jibes he took no heed, for such act but after their kind, and seldom show kindness or courtesy.

Now without the town there spread a great forest, thick with trees, and through the forest ran a river. Towards this forest Graelent rode, deep in heavy thought, and very dolent. Having ridden for a little space beneath the trees, he spied within a leafy thicket a fair white hart, whiter even than snow on winter branches. The hart fled before him, and Graelent followed so closely in her track that man and deer presently came together to a grassy lawn, in the midst of which sprang a fountain of clear, sweet water. Now in this fountain a demoiselle disported herself for her delight. Her raiment was set on a bush near by, and her two maidens stood on the bank busied in their lady's service. Graelent forgot the chase at so sweet a sight, since never in his life had he seen so lovely a dame. For the lady was slender in shape and white, very gracious and dainty of colour, with laughing eyes and an open brow, certainly the most beautiful thing in all the world. Graelent dared not draw nigh the fountain for fear of troubling the dame, so he came softly to the bush to set hands upon her raiment. The two maidens marked his approach, and at their fright the lady turned, and calling him by name, cried with great anger,

"Graelent, put my raiment down, for it will profit you little even if you carry it away, and leave me naked in this wood. But if you are indeed too greedy of gain to remember your knighthood, at least return me my shift, and content yourself with my mantle, since it will bring you money, as it is very good."

"I am not a merchant's son," answered Graelent merrily, "nor am I a huckster to sell mantles in a booth. If your cloak were worth the spoil of three castles I would not now carry it from the bush. Come forth from your bathing, fair friend, and clothe yourself in your vesture, for you have to say a certain word to me."

"I will not trust myself to your hand, for you might seize upon me," answered the lady, "and I tell you frankly that I put no faith in your word, nor have had any dealings with your school."

Then Graelent answered still more merrily, "Lady, needs must I suffer your wrath. But at least I will guard your raiment till you come forth from the well and, fairest, very dainty is your body in my eyes."

When the lady knew that Graelent would not depart, nor render again her raiment, then she demanded surety that he would do her no hurt. This thing was accorded between them, so she came forth from the fountain, and did her vesture upon her. Then Graelent took her gently by the left hand, and prayed and required of her that she would grant him love for love. But the lady answered, "I marvel greatly that you should dare to speak to me in this fashion, for I have little reason to think you discreet. You are bold, sir knight, and overbold, to seek to ally yourself with a woman of my lineage."

Sir Graelent was not abashed by the dame's proud spirit, but wooed and prayed her gently and sweetly, promising that if she granted him her love he would serve her in all loyalty, and never depart therefrom all the days of his life. The demoiselle hearkened to the words of Graelent, and saw plainly that he was a valiant knight, courteous and wise. She thought within herself that should she send him from her, never might she find again so sure a friend. Since, then, she knew him worthy of her love, she kissed him softly, and spoke to him in this manner, "Graelent, I will love you none the less truly, though we have not met until this day. But one thing is needful that our love may endure. Never must you speak a word by which this hidden thing may become known. I will furnish you with deniers in your purse, with cloth of silk, with silver and with gold. Night and day will I stay with you, and great shall be the love between us twain. You shall see me riding at your side; you may talk and laugh with me at your pleasure, but I must never be seen of your comrades, nor must they know aught concerning your bride. Graelent, you are loyal, brave, and courteous, and comely enough to the view. For you I spread my snare at the fountain; for you shall I suffer heavy pains, as well I knew before I set forth on this adventure. Now must I trust to your discretion, for if you speak vainly and boastfully of this thing then am I undone. Remain now for a year in this country, which shall be for you a home that your lady loves well. But noon is past, and it is time for you to go. Farewell, and a messenger shortly shall tell you that which I would have you do."

Graelent took leave of the lady, and she sweetly clasped and kissed him farewell. He returned to his lodging, dismounted from his steed, and entering within a chamber, leaned from the casement, considering this strange adventure. Looking towards the forest he saw a varlet issue therefrom riding upon a palfrey. He drew rein before Graelent's door, and taking his feet from the stirrup, saluted the knight. So Graelent inquired from whence he rode, and of his name and business.

"Sir," answered he, "I am the messenger of your lady. She sends you this destrier by my hand, and would have me enter in your service, to pay your servitors their wages and to take charge of your lodging."

When Graelent heard this message he thought it both good and fair. He kissed the varlet upon the cheek, and accepting his gift, caused the destrier—which was the noblest, the swiftest and the most speedy under the sun—to be led to the stable. Then the varlet carried his baggage to his master's chamber, and took therefrom a large cushion and a rich coverlet which he spread upon the couch. After this he drew thereout a purse containing much gold and silver, and stout cloth fitting for the knight's apparel. Then he sent

for the host, and paying him what was owing, called upon him to witness that he was recompensed most largely for the lodging. He bade him also to seek out such knights as should pass through the town to refresh and solace themselves in the company of his lord. The host was a worthy man. He made ready a plenteous dinner, and inquired through the town for such poor knights as were in misaise by reason of prison or of war. These he brought to the hostelry of Sir Graelent, and comforted them with instruments of music, and with all manner of mirth. Amongst them sat Graelent at meat, gay and debonair, and richly apparelled. Moreover, to these poor knights and the harpers Graelent gave goodly gifts, so that there was not a citizen in all the town who did not hold him in great worship, and regard him as his lord.

From this moment Graelent lived greatly at his ease, for not a cloud was in his sky. His lady came at will and pleasure; all day long they laughed and played together, and at night she lay softly at his side. What truer happiness might he know than this? Often, besides, he rode to such tournaments of the land as he was able, and all men esteemed him for a stout and worthy knight. Very pleasant were his days, and his love, and if such things might last for ever he had nothing else to ask of life.

When a full year had passed by, the season drew to the Feast of Pentecost. Now it was the custom of the King to summon at that tide his barons and all who held their fiefs of him to his Court for a rich banquet. Amongst these lords was bidden Sir Graelent. After men had eaten and drunk the whole day, and all were merry, the King commanded the Queen to put off her royal robes, and to stand forth upon the dais. Then he boasted before the company,

"Lord barons, how seems it to you? Beneath the sky is there a lovelier Queen than mine, be she maid, lady or demoiselle?"

So all the lords made haste to praise the Queen, and to cry and affirm that in all the world was neither maid nor wife so dainty, fresh and fair. Not a single voice but bragged of her beauty, save only that of Graelent. He smiled at their folly, for his heart remembered his friend, and he held in pity all those who so greatly rejoiced in the Queen. So he sat with covered head, and with face bent smiling to the board. The Queen marked his discourtesy, and drew thereto the notice of the King.

"Sire, do you observe this dishonour! Not one of these mighty lords but has praised the beauty of your wife, save Graelent only, who makes a mock of her. Always has he held me in envy and despite."

The King commanded Graelent to his throne, and in the hearing of all bade the knight to tell, on his faith as vassal to his liege, for what reason he had hid his face and laughed.

"Sire," answered Graelent to the King, "Sire, hearken to my words. In all the world no man of your lineage does so shameful a deed as this. You make your wife a show upon a stage. You force your lords to praise her just with lies, saying that the sun does not shine upon her peer. One man will tell the truth to your face, and say that very easily can be found a fairer dame than she."

Right heavy was the King when he heard these words. He conjured Graelent to tell him straightly if he knew a daintier dame.

"Yes, Sire, and thirty times more gracious than the Queen."

The Queen was marvellously wrathful to hear this thing, and prayed her husband of his grace to compel the knight to bring that woman to the Court of whose beauty he made so proud a boast.

"Set us side by side, and let the choice be made between us. Should she prove the fairer let him go in peace; but if not, let justice be done on him for his calumny and malice."

So the King bade his guards to lay hands on Graelent, swearing that between them never should be love nor peace, nor should the knight issue forth from prison, until he had brought before him her whose beauty he had praised so much.

Graelent was held a captive. He repented him of his hasty words, and begged the King to grant him respite. He feared to have lost his friend, and sweated grievously with rage and mortification. But though many of the King's house pitied him in his evil case, the long days brought him no relief, until a full year went by, and once again the King made a great banquet to his barons and his lieges. Then was Graelent brought to hall, and put to liberty on such terms that he would return bringing with him her whose loveliness he had praised before the King. Should she

prove so desirable and dear, as his boast, then all would be well, for he had naught to fear. But if he returned without his lady, then he must go to judgment, and his only hope would be in the mercy of the King.

Graelent mounted his good horse, and parted from the Court sad and wrathful. He sought his lodging, and inquired for his servant, but might not find him. He called upon his friend, but the lady did not heed his voice. Then Graelent gave way to despair, and preferred death to life. He shut himself within his chamber, crying upon his dear one for grace and mercy, but from her he got neither speech nor comfort. So seeing that his love had withdrawn herself from him by reason of his grievous fault, he took no rest by night or day, and held his life in utter despite. For a full year he lived in this piteous case, so that it was marvellous to those about him that he might endure his life.

On the day appointed the sureties brought Graelent where the King was set in hall with his lords. Then the King inquired of Graelent where was now his friend.

"Sire," answered the knight, "she is not here, for in no wise might I find her. Now do with me according to your will."

"Sir Graelent," said the King, "very foully have you spoken. You have slandered the Queen, and given all my lords the lie. When you go from my hands never will you do more mischief with your tongue."

Then the King spoke with a high voice to his barons.

"Lords, I pray and command you to give judgment in this matter. You heard the blame that Graelent set upon me before all my Court. You know the deep dishonour that he fastened on the Queen. How may such a disloyal vassal deal honestly with his lord, for as the proverb tells, 'Hope not for friendship from the man who beats your dog!'"

The lords of the King's household went out from before him, and gathered themselves together to consider their judgment. They kept silence for a great space, for it was grievous to them to deal harshly with so valiant a knight. Whilst they thus refrained from words a certain page hastened unto them, and prayed them not to press the matter, for (said he) "even now two young maidens, the freshest maids in all the realm, seek the Court. Perchance they bring succour to the good knight, and, so it be the will of God, may deliver him from peril." So the lords waited right gladly, and presently they saw two damsels come riding to the palace. Very young were these maidens, very slender and gracious, and daintily cloaked in two fair mantles. So when the pages had hastened to hold their stirrup and bridle, the maidens dismounted from their palfreys and entering within the hall came straight before the King.

"Sire," said one of the two damsels, "hearken now to me. My lady commands us to pray you to put back this cause for a while, nor to deliver judgment therein, since she comes to plead with you for the deliverance of this knight."

When the Queen heard this message she was filled with shame, and made speed to get her from the hall. Hardly had she gone than there entered two other damsels, whiter and more sweetly flushed even than their fellows. These bade the King to wait for a little, since their mistress was now at hand. So all men stared upon them, and praised their great beauty, saying that if the maid was so fair, what then must be the loveliness of the dame. When, therefore, the demoiselle came in her turn, the King's household stood upon their feet to give her greeting. Never did woman show so queenly to men's sight as did this lady riding to the hall. Passing sweet she was to see, passing simple and gracious of manner, with softer eyes and a daintier face than girl of mother born. The whole Court marvelled at her beauty, for no spot or blemish might be found in her body. She was richly dressed in a kirtle of vermeil silk, broi-dered with gold, and her mantle was worth the spoil of a king's castle. Her palfrey was of good race, and speedy; the harness and trappings upon him were worth a thousand livres in minted coin. All men pressed about her, praising her face and person, her simplicity and queenlihead. She came at slow pace before the King, and dismounting from the palfrey, spoke very courteously in this fashion.

"Sire," said she, "hearken to me, and you, lord barons, give heed to my pleading. You know the words Graelent spake to the King,

in the ears of men, when the Queen made herself a show before the lords, saying that often had he seen a fairer lady. Very hasty and foolish was his tongue, since he provoked the King to anger. But at least he told the truth when he said that there is no dame so comely but that very easily may be found one more sweet than she. Look now boldly upon my face, and judge you rightly in this quarrel between the Queen and me. So shall Sir Graelent be acquitted of this blame."

Then gazing upon her, all the King's household, lord and lackey, prince and page, cried with one voice that her favour was greater than that of the Queen. The King himself gave judgment with his barons that this thing was so; therefore Sir Graelent was acquitted of his blame, and declared a free man.

When judgment was given the lady took her leave of the King, and attended by her four damsels departed straightway from the hall upon her palfrey. Sir Graelent caused his white horse to be saddled, and mounting, followed hotly after her through the town. Day after day he rode in her track, pleading for pity and pardon, but she gave him neither good words nor bad in answer. So far they fared that at last they came to the forest, and taking their way through a deep wood rode to the bank of a fair, clear stream. The lady set her palfrey to the river, but when she saw that Graelent also would enter therein she cried to him,

"Stay, Graelent, the stream is deep, and it is death for you to follow."

Graelent took no heed to her words, but forced his horse to enter the river, so that speedily the waters closed above his head. Then the lady seized his bridle, and with extreme toil brought horse and rider back again to land.

"Graelent," said she, "you may not pass this river, however mightily you pain yourself, therefore must you remain alone on this bank."

Again the lady set her palfrey to the river, but Graelent could not suffer to see her go upon her way alone. Again he forced his horse to enter the water; but the current was very swift and the stream was very deep, so that presently Graelent was torn from his saddle, and being borne away by the stream came very nigh to drown. When the four maidens saw his piteous plight they cried aloud to their lady, and said,

"Lady, for the love of God, take pity on your poor friend. See, how he drowns in this evil case. Alas, cursed be the day you spake soft words in his ear, and gave him the grace of your love. Lady, look how the current hurries him to his death. How may your heart suffer him to drown whom you have held so close! Aid him, nor have the sin on your soul that you endured to let the man who loved you die without your help."

When the lady heard the complaint of her maidens, no longer could she hide the pity she felt in her heart. In all haste she turned her palfrey to the river, and entering the stream clutched her lover by the belt. Thus they won together to the bank. There she stripped the drowned man of his raiment, and wrapping him fast in her own dry mantle cherished him so meetly that presently he came again to life. So she brought him safely into her own land, and none has met Sir Graelent since that day.

But the Breton folk still hold firmly that Graelent yet liveth with his friend. His destrier, when he escaped him from the perilous river, grieved greatly for his master's loss. He sought again the mighty forest, yet never was at rest by night or day. No peace might he find, but ever pawed he with his hoofs upon the ground, and neighed so loudly that the noise went through all the country round about. Many a man coveted so noble a steed, and sought to put bit and bridle in his mouth, yet never might one set hands upon him, for he would not suffer another master. So each year in its season the forest was filled with the cry and the trouble of this noble horse which might not find its lord.

This adventure of the good steed and of the stout knight, who went to the land of faery with his love, was noised abroad throughout all Brittany, and the Bretons made a Lay thereof which was sung in the ears of many people, and was called a Lay of the Death of Sir Graelent.

Mabinogion

THE LADY OF THE FOUNTAIN

King Arthur was at Caerleon upon Usk; and one day he sat in his chamber; and with him were Owain the son of Urien, and Kynon the son of Clydno, and Kai the son of Kyner; and Gwenhwyvar and her handmaidens at needlework by the window. And if it should be said that there was a porter at Arthur's palace, there was none. Glewlwyd Gavaelwawr was there, acting as porter, to welcome guests and strangers, and to receive them with honour, and to inform them of the manners and customs of the Court; and to direct those who came to the Hall or to the presence-chamber, and those who came to take up their lodging.

In the centre of the chamber King Arthur sat upon a seat of green rushes, over which was spread a covering of flame-coloured satin, and a cushion of red satin was under his elbow.

Then Arthur spoke, "If I thought you would not disparage me," said he, "I would sleep while I wait for my repast; and you can entertain one another with relating tales, and can obtain a flagon of mead and some meat from Kai." And the King went to sleep. And Kynon the son of Clydno asked Kai for that which Arthur had promised them. "I, too, will have the good tale which he promised to me," said Kai. "Nay," answered Kynon, "fairer will it be for thee to fulfill Arthur's behest, in the first place, and then we will tell thee the best tale that we know." So Kai went to the kitchen and to the mead-cellar, and returned bearing a flagon of mead and a golden goblet, and a handful of skewers, upon which were broiled collops of meat. Then they ate the collops and began to drink the mead. "Now," said Kai, "it is time for you to give me my story." "Kynon," said Owain, "do thou pay to Kai the tale that is his due." "Truly," said Kynon, "thou art older, and art a better teller of tales, and hast seen more marvellous things than I; do thou therefore pay Kai his tale." "Begin thyself," quoth Owain, "with the best that thou knowest." "I will do so," answered Kynon.

"I was the only son of my mother and father, and I was exceedingly aspiring, and my daring was very great. I thought there was no enterprise in the world too mighty for me, and after I had achieved all the adventures that were in my own country, I equipped myself, and set forth to journey through deserts and distant regions. And at length it chanced that I came to the fairest valley in the world, wherein were trees of equal growth; and a river ran through the valley, and a path was by the side of the river. And I followed the path until mid-day, and continued my journey along the remainder of the valley until the evening; and at the extremity of a plain I came to a large and lustrous Castle, at the foot of which was a torrent. And I approached the Castle, and there I beheld two youths with yellow curling hair, each with a frontlet of gold upon his head, and clad in a garment of yellow satin, and they had gold clasps upon their insteps. In the hand of each of them was an ivory bow, strung with the sinews of the stag; and their arrows had shafts of the bone of the whale, and were winged with peacock's feathers; the shafts also had golden heads. And they had daggers with blades of gold, and with hilts of the bone of the whale. And they were shooting their daggers.

"And a little way from them I saw a man in the prime of life, with his beard newly shorn, clad in a robe and a mantle of yellow satin; and round the top of his mantle was a band of gold lace. On his feet were shoes of variegated leather, fastened by two bosses of gold. When I saw him, I went towards him and saluted him, and such was his courtesy that he no sooner received my greet-

ing than he returned it. And he went with me towards the Castle. Now there were no dwellers in the Castle except those who were in one hall. And there I saw four-and-twenty damsels, embroidering satin at a window. And this I tell thee, Kai, that the least fair of them was fairer than the fairest maid thou hast ever beheld in the Island of Britain, and the least lovely of them was more lovely than Gwenhwyvar, the wife of Arthur, when she has appeared loveliest at the Offering, on the day of the Nativity, or at the feast of Easter. They rose up at my coming, and six of them took my horse, and divested me of my armour; and six others took my arms, and washed them in a vessel until they were perfectly bright. And the third six spread cloths upon the tables and prepared meat. And the fourth six took off my soiled garments, and placed others upon me; namely, an under-vest and a doublet of fine linen, and a robe, and a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin with a broad gold band upon the mantle. And they placed cushions both beneath and around me, with coverings of red linen; and I sat down. Now the six maidens who had taken my horse, unharnessed him, as well as if they had been the best squires in the Island of Britain. Then, behold, they brought bowls of silver wherein was water to wash, and towels of linen, some green and some white; and I washed. And in a little while the man sat down to the table. And I sat next to him, and below me sat all the maidens, except those who waited on us. And the table was of silver, and the cloths upon the table were of linen; and no vessel was served upon the table that was not either of gold or of silver, or of buffalo-horn. And our meat was brought to us. And verily, Kai, I saw there every sort of meat and every sort of liquor that I have ever seen elsewhere; but the meat and the liquor were better served there than I have ever seen them in any other place.

"Until the repast was half over, neither the man nor any one of the damsels spoke a single word to me; but when the man perceived that it would be more agreeable to me to converse than to eat any more, he began to inquire of me who I was. I said I was glad to find that there was some one who would discourse with me, and that it was not considered so great a crime at that Court for people to hold converse together. 'Chieftain,' said the man, 'we would have talked to thee sooner, but we feared to disturb thee during thy repast; now, however, we will discourse.' Then I told the man who I was, and what was the cause of my journey; and said that I was seeking whether any one was superior to me, or whether I could gain the mastery over all. The man looked upon me, and he smiled and said, 'If I did not fear to distress thee too much, I would show thee that which thou seekest.' Upon this I became anxious and sorrowful, and when the man perceived it, he said, 'If thou wouldest rather that I should show thee thy disadvantage than thine advantage, I will do so. Sleep here to-night, and in the morning arise early, and take the road upwards through the valley until thou reachest the wood through which thou camest hither. A little way within the wood thou wilt meet with a road branching off to the right, by which thou must proceed, until thou comest to a large sheltered glade with a mound in the centre. And thou wilt see a black man of great stature on the top of the mound. He is not smaller in size than two of the men of this world. He has but one foot; and one eye in the middle of his forehead. And he has a club of iron, and it is certain that there are no two men in the world who would not find their burden in that club. And he is not a comely man, but on the con-

trary he is exceedingly ill-favoured; and he is the woodward of that wood. And thou wilt see a thousand wild animals grazing around him. Inquire of him the way out of the glade, and he will reply to thee briefly, and will point out the road by which thou shalt find that which thou art in quest of.

"And long seemed that night to me. And the next morning I arose and equipped myself, and mounted my horse, and proceeded straight through the valley to the wood; and I followed the cross-road which the man had pointed out to me, till at length I arrived at the glade. And there was I three times more astonished at the number of wild animals that I beheld, than the man had said I should be. And the black man was there, sitting upon the top of the mound. Huge of stature as the man had told me that he was, I found him to exceed by far the description he had given me of him. As for the iron club which the man had told me was a burden for two men, I am certain, Kai, that it would be a heavy weight for four warriors to lift; and this was in the black man's hand. And he only spoke to me in answer to my questions. Then I asked him what power he held over those animals. 'I will show thee, little man,' said he. And he took his club in his hand, and with it he struck a stag a great blow so that he brayed vehemently, and at his braying the animals came together, as numerous as the stars in the sky, so that it was difficult for me to find room in the glade to stand among them. There were serpents, and dragons, and divers sorts of animals. And he looked at them, and bade them go and feed; and they bowed their heads, and did him homage as vassals to their lord.

"Then the black man said to me, 'Seest thou now, little man, what power I hold over these animals?' Then I inquired of him the way, and he became very rough in his manner to me; however, he asked me whither I would go? And when I told him who I was and what I sought, he directed me. 'Take,' said he, 'that path that leads towards the head of the glade, and ascend the wooded steep until thou comest to its summit; and there thou wilt find an open space like to a large valley, and in the midst of it a tall tree, whose branches are greener than the greenest pine-trees. Under this tree is a fountain, and by the side of the fountain a marble slab, and on the marble slab a silver bowl, attached by a chain of silver, so that it may not be carried away. Take the bowl and throw a bowlful of water upon the slab, and thou wilt hear a mighty peal of thunder, so that thou wilt think that heaven and earth are trembling with its fury. With the thunder there will come a shower so severe that it will be scarce possible for thee to endure it and live. And the shower will be of hailstones; and after the shower, the weather will become fair, but every leaf that was upon the tree will have been carried away by the shower. Then a flight of birds will come and alight upon the tree; and in thine own country thou didst never hear a strain so sweet as that which they will sing. And at the moment thou art most delighted with the song of the birds, thou wilt hear a murmuring and complaining coming towards thee along the valley. And thou wilt see a knight upon a coal-black horse, clothed in black velvet, and with a pennon of black linen upon his lance; and he will ride unto thee to encounter thee with the utmost speed. If thou fleest from him he will overtake thee, and if thou abidest there, as sure as thou art a mounted knight, he will leave thee on foot. And if thou dost not find trouble in that adventure, thou needest not seek it during the rest of thy life.'

"So I journeyed on, until I reached the summit of the steep, and there I found everything as the black man had described it to me. And I went up to the tree, and beneath it I saw the fountain, and by its side the marble slab, and the silver bowl fastened by the chain. Then I took the bowl, and cast a bowlful of water upon the slab; and thereupon, behold, the thunder came, much more violent than the black man had led me to expect; and after the thunder came the shower; and of a truth I tell thee, Kai, that there is neither man nor beast that can endure that shower and live. For not one of those hailstones would be stopped, either by the flesh or by the skin, until it had reached the bone. I turned my horse's flank towards the shower, and placed the beak of my shield over his head and neck, while I held the upper part of it over my own head. And thus I withstood the shower. When I looked on the tree there was not a single leaf upon it, and then the sky became

clear, and with that, behold the birds lighted upon the tree, and sang. And truly, Kai, I never heard any melody equal to that, either before or since. And when I was most charmed with listening to the birds, lo, a murmuring voice was heard through the valley, approaching me and saying, 'Oh, Knight, what has brought thee hither? What evil have I done to thee, that thou shouldst act towards me and my possessions as thou hast this day? Dost thou not know that the shower to-day has left in my dominions neither man nor beast alive that was exposed to it?' And thereupon, behold, a Knight on a black horse appeared, clothed in jet-black velvet, and with a tabard of black linen about him. And we charged each other, and, as the onset was furious, it was not long before I was overthrown. Then the Knight passed the shaft of his lance through the bridle rein of my horse, and rode off with the two horses, leaving me where I was. And he did not even bestow so much notice upon me as to imprison me, nor did he despoil me of my arms. So I returned along the road by which I had come. And when I reached the glade where the black man was, I confess to thee, Kai, it is a marvel that I did not melt down into a liquid pool, through the shame that I felt at the black man's derision. And that night I came to the same castle where I had spent the night preceding. And I was more agreeably entertained that night than I had been the night before; and I was better feasted, and I conversed freely with the inmates of the castle, and none of them alluded to my expedition to the fountain, neither did I mention it to any; and I remained there that night. When I arose on the morrow, I found, ready saddled, a dark bay palfrey, with nostrils as red as scarlet; and after putting on my armour, and leaving there my blessing, I returned to my own Court. And that horse I still possess, and he is in the stable yonder. And I declare that I would not part with him for the best palfrey in the Island of Britain.

"Now of a truth, Kai, no man ever before confessed to an adventure so much to his own discredit, and verily it seems strange to me, that neither before nor since have I heard of any person besides myself who knew of this adventure, and that the subject of it should exist within King Arthur's dominions, without any other person lighting upon it."

"Now," quoth Owain, "would it not be well to go and endeavour to discover that place?"

"By the hand of my friend," said Kai, "often dost thou utter that with thy tongue which thou wouldst not make good with thy deeds."

"In very truth," said Gwenhwyvar, "it were better thou wert hanged, Kai, than to use such uncourteous speech towards a man like Owain."

"By the hand of my friend, good Lady," said Kai, "thy praise of Owain is not greater than mine."

With that Arthur awoke, and asked if he had not been sleeping a little.

"Yes, Lord," answered Owain, "thou hast slept awhile."

"Is it time for us to go to meat?"

"It is, Lord," said Owain.

Then the horn for washing was sounded, and the King and all his household sat down to eat. And when the meal was ended, Owain withdrew to his lodging, and made ready his horse and his arms.

On the morrow, with the dawn of day, he put on his armour, and mounted his charger, and travelled through distant lands and over desert mountains. And at length he arrived at the valley which Kynon had described to him; and he was certain that it was the same that he sought. And journeying along the valley by the side of the river, he followed its course till he came to the plain and within sight of the Castle. When he approached the Castle, he saw the youths shooting their daggers in the place where Kynon had seen them, and the yellow man, to whom the Castle belonged, standing hard by. And no sooner had Owain saluted the yellow man than he was saluted by him in return.

And he went forward towards the Castle, and there he saw the chamber, and when he had entered the chamber he beheld the maidens working at satin embroidery, in chairs of gold. And their beauty and their comeliness seemed to Owain far greater than Kynon had represented to him. And they rose to wait upon Owain, as they had done to Kynon, and the meal which they set

before him gave more satisfaction to Owain than it had done to Kynon.

About the middle of the repast, the yellow man asked Owain the object of his journey. And Owain made it known to him, and said, "I am in quest of the Knight who guards the fountain." Upon this the yellow man smiled, and said that he was as loth to point out that adventure to Owain as he had been to Kynon. However, he described the whole to Owain, and they retired to rest.

The next morning Owain found his horse made ready for him by the damsels, and he set forward and came to the glade where the black man was. And the stature of the black man seemed more wonderful to Owain than it had done to Kynon, and Owain asked of him his road, and he showed it to him. And Owain followed the road, as Kynon had done, till he came to the green tree; and he beheld the fountain, and the slab beside the fountain, with the bowl upon it. And Owain took the bowl, and threw a bowlful of water upon the slab. And, lo, the thunder was heard, and after the thunder came the shower, much more violent than Kynon had described, and after the shower the sky became bright. And when Owain looked at the tree, there was not one leaf upon it. And immediately the birds came, and settled upon the tree, and sang. And when their song was most pleasing to Owain, he beheld a Knight coming towards him through the valley, and he prepared to receive him; and encountered him violently. Having broken both their lances, they drew their swords, and fought blade to blade. Then Owain struck the Knight a blow through his helmet, head-piece and visor, and through the skin, and the flesh, and the bone, until it wounded the very brain. Then the black Knight felt that he had received a mortal wound, upon which he turned his horse's head, and fled. And Owain pursued him, and followed close upon him, although he was not near enough to strike him with his sword. Thereupon Owain descried a vast and resplendent Castle. And they came to the Castle gate. And the black Knight was allowed to enter, and the portcullis was let fall upon Owain; and it struck his horse behind the saddle, and cut him in two, and carried away the rowels of the spurs that were upon Owain's heels. And the portcullis descended to the floor. And the rowels of the spurs and part of the horse were without, and Owain with the other part of the horse remained between the two gates, and the inner gate was closed, so that Owain could not go thence; and Owain was in a perplexing situation. And while he was in this state, he could see through an aperture in the gate, a street facing him, with a row of houses on each side. And he beheld a maiden, with yellow curling hair, and a frontlet of gold upon her head; and she was clad in a dress of yellow satin, and on her feet were shoes of variegated leather. And she approached the gate, and desired that it should be opened. "Heaven knows, Lady," said Owain, "it is no more possible for me to open to thee from hence, than it is for thee to set me free." "Truly," said the damsel, "it is very sad that thou canst not be released, and every woman ought to succour thee, for I never saw one more faithful in the service of ladies than thou. As a friend thou art the most sincere, and as a lover the most devoted. Therefore," quoth she, "whatever is in my power to do for thy release, I will do it. Take this ring and put it on thy finger, with the stone inside thy hand; and close thy hand upon the stone. And as long as thou concealest it, it will conceal thee. When they have consulted together, they will come forth to fetch thee, in order to put thee to death; and they will be much grieved that they cannot find thee. And I will await thee on the horseblock yonder; and thou wilt be able to see me, though I cannot see thee; therefore come and place thy hand upon my shoulder, that I may know that thou art near me. And by the way that I go hence, do thou accompany me."

Then she went away from Owain, and he did all that the maiden had told him. And the people of the Castle came to seek Owain, to put him to death, and when they found nothing but the half of his horse, they were sorely grieved.

And Owain vanished from among them, and went to the maiden, and placed his hand upon her shoulder; whereupon she set off, and Owain followed her, until they came to the door of a large and beautiful chamber, and the maiden opened it, and they went in, and closed the door. And Owain looked around the chamber, and behold there was not even a single nail in it that

was not painted with gorgeous colours; and there was not a single panel that had not sundry images in gold portrayed upon it.

The maiden kindled a fire, and took water in a silver bowl, and put a towel of white linen on her shoulder, and gave Owain water to wash. Then she placed before him a silver table, inlaid with gold; upon which was a cloth of yellow linen; and she brought him food. And of a truth, Owain had never seen any kind of meat that was not there in abundance, but it was better cooked there than he had ever found it in any other place. Nor did he ever see so excellent a display of meat and drink, as there. And there was not one vessel from which he was served, that was not of gold or of silver. And Owain ate and drank, until late in the afternoon, when lo, they heard a mighty clamour in the Castle; and Owain asked the maiden what that outcry was. "They are administering extreme unction," said she, "to the Nobleman who owns the Castle." And Owain went to sleep.

The couch which the maiden had prepared for him was meet for Arthur himself; it was of scarlet, and fur, and satin, and sendal, and fine linen. In the middle of the night they heard a woful outcry. "What outcry again is this?" said Owain. "The Nobleman who owned the Castle is now dead," said the maiden. And a little after daybreak, they heard an exceeding loud clamour and wailing. And Owain asked the maiden what was the cause of it. "They are bearing to the church the body of the Nobleman who owned the Castle."

And Owain rose up, and clothed himself, and opened a window of the chamber, and looked towards the Castle; and he could see neither the bounds, nor the extent of the hosts that filled the streets. And they were fully armed; and a vast number of women were with them, both on horseback and on foot; and all the ecclesiastics in the city, singing. And it seemed to Owain that the sky resounded with the vehemence of their cries, and with the noise of the trumpets, and with the singing of the ecclesiastics. In the midst of the throng, he beheld the bier, over which was a veil of white linen; and wax tapers were burning beside and around it, and none that supported the bier was lower in rank than a powerful Baron.

Never did Owain see an assemblage so gorgeous with satin, and silk, and sendal. And following the train, he beheld a lady with yellow hair falling over her shoulders, and stained with blood; and about her a dress of yellow satin, which was torn. Upon her feet were shoes of variegated leather. And it was a marvel that the ends of her fingers were not bruised, from the violence with which she smote her hands together. Truly she would have been the fairest lady Owain ever saw, had she been in her usual guise. And her cry was louder than the shout of the men, or the clamour of the trumpets. No sooner had he beheld the lady, than he became inflamed with her love, so that it took entire possession of him.

Then he inquired of the maiden who the lady was. "Heaven knows," replied the maiden, "she may be said to be the fairest, and the most chaste, and the most liberal, and the wisest, and the most noble of women. And she is my mistress; and she is called the Countess of the Fountain, the wife of him whom thou didst slay yesterday." "Verily," said Owain, "she is the woman that I love best." "Verily," said the maiden, "she shall also love thee not a little."

And with that the maid arose, and kindled a fire, and filled a pot with water, and placed it to warm; and she brought a towel of white linen, and placed it around Owain's neck; and she took a goblet of ivory, and a silver basin, and filled them with warm water, wherewith she washed Owain's head. Then she opened a wooden casket, and drew forth a razor, whose haft was of ivory, and upon which were two rivets of gold. And she shaved his beard, and she dried his head, and his throat, with the towel. Then she rose up from before Owain, and brought him to eat. And truly Owain had never so good a meal, nor was he ever so well served.

When he had finished his repast, the maiden arranged his couch. "Come here," said she, "and sleep, and I will go and woo for thee." And Owain went to sleep, and the maiden shut the door of the chamber after her, and went towards the Castle. When she came there, she found nothing but mourning, and sorrow; and the Countess in her chamber could not bear the sight of any one through grief. Luned came and saluted her, but the Countess an-

swered her not. And the maiden bent down towards her, and said, "What aileth thee, that thou answerest no one to-day?" "Luned," said the Countess, "what change hath befallen thee, that thou hast not come to visit me in my grief? It was wrong in thee, and I having made thee rich; it was wrong in thee that thou didst not come to see me in my distress. That was wrong in thee." "Truly," said Luned, "I thought thy good sense was greater than I find it to be. Is it well for thee to mourn after that good man, or for anything else, that thou canst not have?" "I declare to heaven," said the Countess, "that in the whole world there is not a man equal to him." "Not so," said Luned, "for an ugly man would be as good as, or better than he." "I declare to heaven," said the Countess, "that were it not repugnant to me to cause to be put to death one whom I have brought up, I would have thee executed, for making such a comparison to me. As it is, I will banish thee." "I am glad," said Luned, "that thou hast no other cause to do so, than that I would have been of service to thee where thou didst not know what was to thine advantage. And henceforth evil betide whichever of us shall make the first advance towards reconciliation to the other; whether I should seek an invitation from thee, or thou of thine own accord shouldst send to invite me."

With that Luned went forth: and the Countess arose and followed her to the door of the chamber, and began coughing loudly. And when Luned looked back, the Countess beckoned to her; and she returned to the Countess. "In truth," said the Countess, "evil is thy disposition; but if thou knowest what is to my advantage, declare it to me." "I will do so," quoth she.

"Thou knowest that except by warfare and arms it is impossible for thee to preserve thy possessions; delay not, therefore, to seek some one who can defend them." "And how can I do that?" said the Countess. "I will tell thee," said Luned. "Unless thou canst defend the fountain, thou canst not maintain thy dominions; and no one can defend the fountain, except it be a knight of Arthur's household; and I will go to Arthur's Court, and ill betide me, if I return thence without a warrior who can guard the fountain as well as, or even better than, he who defended it formerly." "That will be hard to perform," said the Countess. "Go, however, and make proof of that which thou hast promised."

Luned set out, under the pretence of going to Arthur's Court; but she went back to the chamber where she had left Owain; and she tarried there with him as long as it might have taken her to have travelled to the Court of King Arthur. And at the end of that time, she apparelled herself and went to visit the Countess. And the Countess was much rejoiced when she saw her, and inquired what news she brought from the Court. "I bring thee the best of news," said Luned, "for I have compassed the object of my mission. When wilt thou, that I should present to thee the chieftain who has come with me hither?" "Bring him here to visit me to-morrow, at mid-day," said the Countess, "and I will cause the town to be assembled by that time."

And Luned returned home. And the next day, at noon, Owain arrayed himself in a coat, and a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin, upon which was a broad band of gold lace; and on his feet were high shoes of variegated leather, which were fastened by golden clasps, in the form of lions. And they proceeded to the chamber of the Countess.

Right glad was the Countess of their coming, and she gazed steadfastly upon Owain, and said, "Luned, this knight has not the look of a traveller." "What harm is there in that, lady?" said Luned. "I am certain," said the Countess, "that no other man than this chased the soul from the body of my lord." "So much the better for thee, lady," said Luned, "for had he not been stronger than thy lord he could not have deprived him of life. There is no remedy for that which is past, be it as it may." "Go back to thine abode," said the Countess, "and I will take counsel."

The next day the Countess caused all her subjects to assemble, and showed them that her earldom was left defenceless, and that it could not be protected but with horse and arms, and military skill. "Therefore," said she, "this is what I offer for your choice: either let one of you take me, or give your consent for me to take a husband from elsewhere to defend my dominions."

So they came to the determination that it was better that she should have permission to marry some one from elsewhere; and,

thereupon, she sent for the bishops and archbishops to celebrate her nuptials with Owain. And the men of the earldom did Owain homage.

And Owain defended the Fountain with lance and sword. And this is the manner in which he defended it: Whensoever a knight came there he overthrew him, and sold him for his full worth, and what he thus gained he divided among his barons and his knights; and no man in the whole world could be more beloved than he was by his subjects. And it was thus for the space of three years.

It befell that as Gwalchmai went forth one day with King Arthur, he perceived him to be very sad and sorrowful. And Gwalchmai was much grieved to see Arthur in this state; and he questioned him, saying, "Oh, my lord! what has befallen thee?" "In sooth, Gwalchmai," said Arthur, "I am grieved concerning Owain, whom I have lost these three years, and I shall certainly die if the fourth year passes without my seeing him. Now I am sure, that it is through the tale which Kynon the son of Clydno related, that I have lost Owain." "There is no need for thee," said Gwalchmai, "to summon to arms thy whole dominions on this account, for thou thyself and the men of thy household will be able to avenge Owain, if he be slain; or to set him free, if he be in prison; and, if alive, to bring him back with thee." And it was settled according to what Gwalchmai had said.

Then Arthur and the men of his household prepared to go and seek Owain, and their number was three thousand, besides their attendants. And Kynon the son of Clydno acted as their guide. And Arthur came to the Castle where Kynon had been before, and when he came there the youths were shooting in the same place, and the yellow man was standing hard by. When the yellow man saw Arthur he greeted him, and invited him to the Castle; and Arthur accepted his invitation, and they entered the Castle together. And great as was the number of his retinue, their presence was scarcely observed in the Castle, so vast was its extent. And the maidens rose up to wait on them, and the service of the maidens appeared to them all to excel any attendance they had ever met with; and even the pages who had charge of the horses were no worse served, that night, than Arthur himself would have been in his own palace.

The next morning Arthur set out thence, with Kynon for his guide, and came to the place where the black man was. And the stature of the black man was more surprising to Arthur than it had been represented to him. And they came to the top of the wooded steep, and traversed the valley till they reached the green tree, where they saw the fountain, and the bowl, and the slab. And upon that, Kai came to Arthur and spoke to him. "My lord," said he, "I know the meaning of all this, and my request is, that thou wilt permit me to throw the water on the slab, and to receive the first adventure that may befall." And Arthur gave him leave.

Then Kai threw a bowlful of water upon the slab, and immediately there came the thunder, and after the thunder the shower. And such a thunderstorm they had never known before, and many of the attendants who were in Arthur's train were killed by the shower. After the shower had ceased the sky became clear; and on looking at the tree they beheld it completely leafless. Then the birds descended upon the tree, and the song of the birds was far sweeter than any strain they had ever heard before. Then they beheld a knight on a coal-black horse, clothed in black satin, coming rapidly towards them. And Kai met him and encountered him, and it was not long before Kai was overthrown. And the knight withdrew, and Arthur and his host encamped for the night.

And when they arose in the morning, they perceived the signal of combat upon the lance of the Knight. And Kai came to Arthur, and spoke to him: "My lord," said he, "though I was overthrown yesterday, if it seem good to thee, I would gladly meet the Knight again to-day." "Thou mayst do so," said Arthur. And Kai went towards the Knight. And on the spot he overthrew Kai, and struck him with the head of his lance in the forehead, so that it broke his helmet and the head-piece, and pierced the skin and the flesh, the breadth of the spear-head, even to the bone. And Kai returned to his companions.

After this, all the household of Arthur went forth, one after the other, to combat the Knight, until there was not one that was not overthrown by him, except Arthur and Gwalchmai. And

Arthur armed himself to encounter the Knight. "Oh, my lord," said Gwalchmai, "permit me to fight with him first." And Arthur permitted him. And he went forth to meet the Knight, having over himself and his horse a satin robe of honour which had been sent him by the daughter of the Earl of Rhangyw, and in this dress he was not known by any of the host. And they charged each other, and fought all that day until the evening, and neither of them was able to unhorse the other.

The next day they fought with strong lances, and neither of them could obtain the mastery.

And the third day they fought with exceeding strong lances. And they were incensed with rage, and fought furiously, even until noon. And they gave each other such a shock that the girths of their horses were broken, so that they fell over their horses' cruppers to the ground. And they rose up speedily, and drew their swords, and resumed the combat; and the multitude that witnessed their encounter felt assured that they had never before seen two men so valiant or so powerful. And had it been midnight, it would have been light from the fire that flashed from their weapons. And the Knight gave Gwalchmai a blow that turned his helmet from off his face, so that the Knight knew that it was Gwalchmai. Then Owain said, "My lord Gwalchmai, I did not know thee for my cousin, owing to the robe of honour that enveloped thee; take my sword and my arms." Said Gwalchmai, "Thou, Owain, art the victor; take thou my sword." And with that Arthur saw that they were conversing, and advanced towards them. "My lord Arthur," said Gwalchmai, "here is Owain, who has vanquished me, and will not take my arms." "My lord," said Owain, "it is he that has vanquished me, and he will not take my sword." "Give me your swords," said Arthur, "and then neither of you has vanquished the other." Then Owain put his arms around Arthur's neck, and they embraced. And all the host hurried forward to see Owain, and to embrace him; and there was nigh being a loss of life, so great was the press.

And they retired that night, and the next day Arthur prepared to depart. "My lord," said Owain, "this is not well of thee; for I have been absent from thee these three years, and during all that time, up to this very day, I have been preparing a banquet for thee, knowing that thou wouldst come to seek me. Tarry with me, therefore, until thou and thy attendants have recovered the fatigues of the journey, and have been anointed."

And they all proceeded to the Castle of the Countess of the Fountain, and the banquet which had been three years preparing was consumed in three months. Never had they a more delicious or agreeable banquet. And Arthur prepared to depart. Then he sent an embassy to the Countess, to beseech her to permit Owain to go with him for the space of three months, that he might show him to the nobles and the fair dames of the Island of Britain. And the Countess gave her consent, although it was very painful to her. So Owain came with Arthur to the Island of Britain. And when he was once more amongst his kindred and friends, he remained three years, instead of three months, with them.

And as Owain one day sat at meat, in the city of Caerlleon upon Usk, behold a damsel entered upon a bay horse, with a curling mane and covered with foam, and the bridle and so much as was seen of the saddle were of gold. And the damsel was arrayed in a dress of yellow satin. And she came up to Owain, and took the ring from off his hand. "Thus," said she, "shall be treated the deceiver, the traitor, the faithless, the disgraced, and the beardless." And she turned her horse's head and departed.

Then his adventure came to Owain's remembrance, and he was sorrowful; and having finished eating he went to his own abode and made preparations that night. And the next day he arose but did not go to the Court, but wandered to the distant parts of the earth and to uncultivated mountains. And he remained there until all his apparel was worn out, and his body was wasted away, and his hair was grown long. And he went about with the wild beasts and fed with them, until they became familiar with him; but at length he grew so weak that he could no longer bear their company. Then he descended from the mountains to the valley, and came to a park that was the fairest in the world, and belonged to a widowed Countess.

One day the Countess and her maidens went forth to walk by a lake, that was in the middle of the park. And they saw the form of a man. And they were terrified. Nevertheless they went near him, and touched him, and looked at him. And they saw that there was life in him, though he was exhausted by the heat of the sun. And the Countess returned to the Castle, and took a flask full of precious ointment, and gave it to one of her maidens. "Go with this," said she, "and take with thee yonder horse and clothing, and place them near the man we saw just now. And anoint him with this balsam, near his heart; and if there is life in him, he will arise through the efficacy of this balsam. Then watch what he will do."

And the maiden departed from her, and poured the whole of the balsam upon Owain, and left the horse and the garments hard by, and went a little way off, and hid herself to watch him. In a short time she saw him begin to move his arms; and he rose up, and looked at his person, and became ashamed of the unseemliness of his appearance. Then he perceived the horse and the garments that were near him. And he crept forward till he was able to draw the garments to him from off the saddle. And he clothed himself, and with difficulty mounted the horse. Then the damsel discovered herself to him, and saluted him. And he was rejoiced when he saw her, and inquired of her, what land and what territory that was. "Truly," said the maiden, "a widowed Countess owns yonder Castle; at the death of her husband, he left her two Earldoms, but at this day she has but this one dwelling that has not been wrested from her by a young Earl, who is her neighbour, because she refused to become his wife." "That is pity," said Owain. And he and the maiden proceeded to the Castle; and he alighted there, and the maiden conducted him to a pleasant chamber, and kindled a fire and left him.

And the maiden came to the Countess, and gave the flask into her hand. "Ha! maiden," said the Countess, "where is all the balsam?" "Have I not used it all?" said she. "Oh, maiden," said the Countess, "I cannot easily forgive thee this; it is sad for me to have wasted seven-score pounds' worth of precious ointment upon a stranger whom I know not. However, maiden, wait thou upon him, until he is quite recovered."

And the maiden did so, and furnished him with meat and drink, and fire, and lodging, and medicaments, until he was well again. And in three months he was restored to his former guise, and became even more comely than he had ever been before.

One day Owain heard a great tumult, and a sound of arms in the Castle, and he inquired of the maiden the cause thereof. "The Earl," said she, "whom I mentioned to thee, has come before the Castle, with a numerous army, to subdue the Countess." And Owain inquired of her whether the Countess had a horse and arms in her possession. "She has the best in the world," said the maiden. "Wilt thou go and request the loan of a horse and arms for me," said Owain, "that I may go and look at this army?" "I will," said the maiden.

And she came to the Countess, and told her what Owain had said. And the Countess laughed. "Truly," said she, "I will even give him a horse and arms for ever; such a horse and such arms had he never yet, and I am glad that they should be taken by him to-day, lest my enemies should have them against my will to-morrow. Yet I know not what he would do with them."

The Countess bade them bring out a beautiful black steed, upon which was a beechen saddle, and a suit of armour, for man and horse. And Owain armed himself, and mounted the horse, and went forth, attended by two pages completely equipped, with horses and arms. And when they came near to the Earl's army, they could see neither its extent nor its extremity. And Owain asked the pages in which troop the Earl was. "In yonder troop," said they, "in which are four yellow standards. Two of them are before, and two behind him." "Now," said Owain, "do you return and await me near the portal of the Castle." So they returned, and Owain pressed forward until he met the Earl. And Owain drew him completely out of his saddle, and turned his horse's head towards the Castle, and though it was with difficulty, he brought the Earl to the portal, where the pages awaited him. And in they came. And Owain presented the Earl as a gift to the Countess. And said to her, "Behold a requital to thee for thy blessed balsam."

The army encamped around the Castle. And the Earl restored to the Countess the two Earldoms he had taken from her, as a ransom for his life; and for his freedom he gave her the half of his own dominions, and all his gold, and his silver, and his jewels, besides hostages.

And Owain took his departure. And the Countess and all her subjects besought him to remain, but Owain chose rather to wander through distant lands and deserts.

And as he journeyed, he heard a loud yelling in a wood. And it was repeated a second and a third time. And Owain went towards the spot, and beheld a huge craggy mound, in the middle of the wood; on the side of which was a grey rock. And there was a cleft in the rock, and a serpent was within the cleft. And near the rock stood a black lion, and every time the lion sought to go thence, the serpent darted towards him to attack him. And Owain unsheathed his sword, and drew near to the rock; and as the serpent sprang out, he struck him with his sword, and cut him in two. And he dried his sword, and went on his way, as before. But behold the lion followed him, and played about him, as though it had been a greyhound that he had reared.

They proceeded thus throughout the day, until the evening. And when it was time for Owain to take his rest, he dismounted, and turned his horse loose in a flat and wooded meadow. And he struck fire, and when the fire was kindled, the lion brought him fuel enough to last for three nights. And the lion disappeared. And presently the lion returned, bearing a fine large roebuck. And he threw it down before Owain, who went towards the fire with it.

And Owain took the roebuck, and skinned it, and placed collops of its flesh upon skewers, around the fire. The rest of the buck he gave to the lion to devour. While he was doing this, he heard a deep sigh near him, and a second, and a third. And Owain called out to know whether the sigh he heard proceeded from a mortal; and he received answer that it did. "Who art thou?" said Owain. "Truly," said the voice, "I am Luned, the handmaiden of the Countess of the Fountain." "And what dost thou here?" said Owain. "I am imprisoned," said she, "on account of the knight who came from Arthur's Court, and married the Countess. And he stayed a short time with her, but he afterwards departed for the Court of Arthur, and has not returned since. And he was the friend I loved best in the world. And two of the pages in the Countess's chamber traduced him, and called him a deceiver. And I told them that they two were not a match for him alone. So they imprisoned me in the stone vault, and said that I should be put to death, unless he came himself to deliver me, by a certain day; and that is no further off than the day after to-morrow. And I have no one to send to seek him for me. And his name is Owain the son of Urien." "And art thou certain that if that knight knew all this, he would come to thy rescue?" "I am most certain of it," said she.

When the collops were cooked, Owain divided them into two parts, between himself and the maiden; and after they had eaten, they talked together, until the day dawned. And the next morning Owain inquired of the damsel, if there was any place where he could get food and entertainment for that night. "There is, Lord," said she; "cross over yonder, and go along the side of the river, and in a short time thou wilt see a great Castle, in which are many towers, and the Earl who owns that Castle is the most hospitable man in the world. There thou mayst spend the night."

Never did sentinel keep stricter watch over his lord, than the lion that night over Owain.

And Owain accoutred his horse, and passed across by the ford, and came in sight of the Castle. And he entered it, and was honourably received. And his horse was well cared for, and plenty of fodder was placed before him. Then the lion went and lay down in the horse's manger; so that none of the people of the Castle dared to approach him. The treatment which Owain met with there was such as he had never known elsewhere, for every one was as sorrowful as though death had been upon him. And they went to meat; and the Earl sat upon one side of Owain, and on the other side his only daughter. And Owain had never seen any more lovely than she. Then the lion came and placed himself between Owain's feet, and he fed him with every kind of food that

he took himself. And he never saw anything equal to the sadness of the people.

In the middle of the repast the Earl began to bid Owain welcome. "Then," said Owain, "behold, it is time for thee to be cheerful." "Heaven knows," said the Earl, "that it is not thy coming that makes us sorrowful, but we have cause enough for sadness and care." "What is that?" said Owain. "I have two sons," replied the Earl, "and yesterday they went to the mountains to hunt. Now there is on the mountain a monster who kills men and devours them, and he seized my sons; and to-morrow is the time he has fixed to be here, and he threatens that he will then slay my sons before my eyes, unless I will deliver into his hands this my daughter. He has the form of a man, but in stature he is no less than a giant."

"Truly," said Owain, "that is lamentable. And which wilt thou do?" "Heaven knows," said the Earl, "it will be better that my sons should be slain against my will, than that I should voluntarily give up my daughter to him to ill-treat and destroy." Then they talked about other things, and Owain stayed there that night.

The next morning they heard an exceeding great clamour, which was caused by the coming of the giant with the two youths. And the Earl was anxious both to protect his Castle and to release his two sons. Then Owain put on his armour and went forth to encounter the giant, and the lion followed him. And when the giant saw that Owain was armed, he rushed towards him and attacked him. And the lion fought with the giant much more fiercely than Owain did. "Truly," said the giant, "I should find no difficulty in fighting with thee, were it not for the animal that is with thee." Upon that Owain took the lion back to the Castle and shut the gate upon him, and then he returned to fight the giant, as before. And the lion roared very loud, for he heard that it went hard with Owain. And he climbed up till he reached the top of the Earl's hall, and thence he got to the top of the Castle, and he sprang down from the walls and went and joined Owain. And the lion gave the giant a stroke with his paw, which tore him from his shoulder to his hip, and his heart was laid bare, and the giant fell down dead. Then Owain restored the two youths to their father.

The Earl besought Owain to remain with him, and he would not, but set forward towards the meadow where Luned was. And when he came there he saw a great fire kindled, and two youths with beautiful curling auburn hair were leading the maiden to cast her into the fire. And Owain asked them what charge they had against her. And they told him of the compact that was between them, as the maiden had done the night before. "And," said they, "Owain has failed her, therefore we are taking her to be burnt." "Truly," said Owain, "he is a good knight, and if he knew that the maiden was in such peril, I marvel that he came not to her rescue; but if you will accept me in his stead, I will do battle with you." "We will," said the youths, "by him who made us."

And they attacked Owain, and he was hard beset by them. And with that the lion came to Owain's assistance, and they two got the better of the young men. And they said to him, "Chieftain, it was not agreed that we should fight save with thyself alone, and it is harder for us to contend with yonder animal than with thee." And Owain put the lion in the place where the maiden had been imprisoned, and blocked up the door with stones, and he went to fight with the young men, as before. But Owain had not his usual strength, and the two youths pressed hard upon him. And the lion roared incessantly at seeing Owain in trouble; and he burst through the wall until he found a way out, and rushed upon the young men, and instantly slew them. So Luned was saved from being burned.

Then Owain returned with Luned to the dominions of the Countess of the Fountain. And when he went thence he took the Countess with him to Arthur's Court, and she was his wife as long as she lived.

And then he took the road that led to the Court of the savage black man, and Owain fought with him, and the lion did not quit Owain until he had vanquished him. And when he reached the Court of the savage black man he entered the hall, and beheld four-and-twenty ladies, the fairest that could be seen. And the garments which they had on were not worth four-and-twenty pence, and they were as sorrowful as death. And Owain asked

them the cause of their sadness. And they said, "We are the daughters of Earls, and we all came here with our husbands, whom we dearly loved. And we were received with honour and rejoicing. And we were thrown into a state of stupor, and while we were thus, the demon who owns this Castle slew all our husbands, and took from us our horses, and our raiment, and our gold, and our silver; and the corpses of our husbands are still in this house, and many others with them. And this, Chieftain, is the cause of our grief, and we are sorry that thou art come hither, lest harm should befall thee."

And Owain was grieved when he heard this. And he went forth from the Castle, and he beheld a knight approaching him, who saluted him in a friendly and cheerful manner, as if he had been a brother. And this was the savage black man. "In very sooth," said Owain, "it is not to seek thy friendship that I am here." "In sooth," said he, "thou shalt not find it then." And with that they charged each other, and fought furiously. And Owain overcame him, and bound his hands behind his back. Then the black savage besought Owain to spare his life, and spoke thus: "My lord Owain," said he, "it was foretold that thou shouldst come hither and vanquish me, and thou hast done so. I was a robber here, and my house was a house of spoil; but grant me my life, and I will become the keeper of an Hospice, and I will maintain this house as an Hospice for weak and for strong, as long as I live, for the good of thy soul." And Owain accepted this proposal of him, and remained there that night.

And the next day he took the four-and-twenty ladies, and their horses, and their raiment, and what they possessed of goods and jewels, and proceeded with them to Arthur's Court. And if Arthur was rejoiced when he saw him, after he had lost him the first time, his joy was now much greater. And of those ladies, such as wished to remain in Arthur's Court remained there, and such as wished to depart departed.

And thenceforward Owain dwelt at Arthur's Court greatly beloved, as the head of his household, until he went away with his followers; and those were the army of three hundred ravens which Kenverchyn had left him. And wherever Owain went with these he was victorious.

And this is the tale of THE LADY OF THE FOUNTAIN.

PEREDUR THE SON OF EVRAWC

Earl Evrawc owned the Earldom of the North. And he had seven sons. And Evrawc maintained himself not so much by his own possessions as by attending tournaments, and wars, and combats. And, as it often befalls those who join in encounters and wars, he was slain, and six of his sons likewise. Now the name of his seventh son was Peredur, and he was the youngest of them. And he was not of an age to go to wars and encounters, otherwise he might have been slain as well as his father and brothers. His mother was a scheming and thoughtful woman, and she was very solicitous concerning this her only son and his possessions. So she took counsel with herself to leave the inhabited country, and to flee to the deserts and unfrequented wildernesses. And she permitted none to bear her company thither but women and boys, and spiritless men, who were both unaccustomed and unequal to war and fighting. And none dared to bring either horses or arms where her son was, lest he should set his mind upon them. And the youth went daily to divert himself in the forest, by flinging sticks and staves. And one day he saw his mother's flock of goats, and near the goats two hinds were standing. And he marvelled greatly that these two should be without horns, while the others had them. And he thought they had long run wild, and on that account they had lost their horns. And by activity and swiftness of foot, he drove the hinds and the goats together into the house which there was for the goats at the extremity of the forest. Then Peredur returned to his mother. "Ah, mother," said he, "a marvellous thing have I seen in the wood; two of thy goats have run wild, and lost their horns, through their having been so long missing in the wood. And no man had ever more trouble than I had to drive them in." Then they all arose and went to see. And when they beheld the hinds they were greatly astonished.

And one day they saw three knights coming along the horse-road on the borders of the forest. And the three knights were Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, and Geneir Gwystyl, and Owain the son of Urien. And Owain kept on the track of the knight who had divided the apples in Arthur's Court, whom they were in pursuit of. "Mother," said Peredur, "what are those yonder?" "They are angels, my son," said she. "By my faith," said Peredur, "I will go and become an angel with them." And Peredur went to the road, and met them. "Tell me, good soul," said Owain, "sawest thou a knight pass this way, either to-day or yesterday?" "I know not," answered he, "what a knight is." "Such an one as I am," said Owain. "If thou wilt tell me what I ask thee, I will tell thee that which thou askest me." "Gladly will I do so," replied Owain. "What is this?" demanded Peredur, concerning the saddle. "It is a saddle," said Owain. Then he asked about all the accoutrements which he saw upon the men, and the horses, and the arms, and what they were for, and how they were used. And Owain shewed him all these things fully, and told him what use was made of them. "Go forward," said Peredur, "for I saw such an one as thou inquest for, and I will follow thee."

Then Peredur returned to his mother and her company, and he said to her, "Mother, those were not angels, but honourable knights." Then his mother swooned away. And Peredur went to the place where they kept the horses that carried firewood, and that brought meat and drink from the inhabited country to the desert. And he took a bony piebald horse, which seemed to him the strongest of them. And he pressed a pack into the form of a saddle, and with twisted twigs he imitated the trappings which he had seen upon the horses. And when Peredur came again to his mother, the Countess had recovered from her swoon. "My son," said she, "desirest thou to ride forth?" "Yes, with thy leave," said he. "Wait, then, that I may counsel thee before thou goest." "Willingly," he answered; "speak quickly." "Go forward, then," she said, "to the Court of Arthur, where there are the best, and the boldest, and the most bountiful of men. And wherever thou seest a church, repeat there thy Paternoster unto it. And if thou see meat and drink, and have need of them, and none have the kindness or the courtesy to give them to thee, take them thyself. If thou hear an outcry, proceed towards it, especially if it be the outcry of a woman. If thou see a fair jewel, possess thyself of it, and give it to another, for thus thou shalt obtain praise. If thou see a fair woman, pay thy court to her, whether she will or no; for thus thou wilt render thyself a better and more esteemed man than thou wast before."

After this discourse, Peredur mounted the horse, and taking a handful of sharp-pointed forks in his hand, he rode forth. And he journeyed two days and two nights in the woody wildernesses, and in desert places, without food and without drink. And then he came to a vast wild wood, and far within the wood he saw a fair even glade, and in the glade he saw a tent, and the tent seeming to him to be a church, he repeated his Paternoster to it. And he went towards it, and the door of the tent was open. And a golden chair was near the door. And on the chair sat a lovely auburn-haired maiden, with a golden frontlet on her forehead, and sparkling stones in the frontlet, and with a large gold ring on her hand. And Peredur dismounted, and entered the tent. And the maiden was glad at his coming, and bade him welcome. At the entrance of the tent he saw food, and two flasks full of wine, and two loaves of fine wheaten flour, and collops of the flesh of the wild boar. "My mother told me," said Peredur, "wheresoever I saw meat and drink, to take it." "Take the meat and welcome, chieftain," said she. So Peredur took half of the meat and of the liquor himself, and left the rest to the maiden. And when Peredur had finished eating, he bent upon his knee before the maiden. "My mother," said he, "told me, wheresoever I saw a fair jewel, to take it." "Do so, my soul," said she. So Peredur took the ring. And he mounted his horse, and proceeded on his journey.

After this, behold the knight came to whom the tent belonged; and he was the Lord of the Glade. And he saw the track of the horse, and he said to the maiden, "Tell me who has been here since I departed." "A man," said she, "of wonderful demeanour." And she described to him what Peredur's appearance and conduct had been. "Tell me," said he, "did he offer thee any wrong?" "No,"

answered the maiden, "by my faith, he harmed me not." "By my faith, I do not believe thee; and until I can meet with him, and revenge the insult he has done me, and wreak my vengeance upon him, thou shalt not remain two nights in the same house." And the knight arose, and set forth to seek Peredur.

Meanwhile Peredur journeyed on towards Arthur's Court. And before he reached it, another knight had been there, who gave a ring of thick gold at the door of the gate for holding his horse, and went into the Hall where Arthur and his household, and Gwenhwyvar and her maidens, were assembled. And the page of the chamber was serving Gwenhwyvar with a golden goblet. Then the knight dashed the liquor that was therein upon her face, and upon her stomacher, and gave her a violent blow on the face, and said, "If any have the boldness to dispute this goblet with me, and to revenge the insult to Gwenhwyvar, let him follow me to the meadow, and there I will await him." So the knight took his horse, and rode to the meadow. And all the household hung down their heads, lest any of them should be requested to go and avenge the insult to Gwenhwyvar. For it seemed to them, that no one would have ventured on so daring an outrage, unless he possessed such powers, through magic or charms, that none could be able to take vengeance upon him. Then, behold, Peredur entered the Hall, upon the bony piebald horse, with the uncouth trappings upon it; and in this way he traversed the whole length of the Hall. In the centre of the Hall stood Kai. "Tell me, tall man," said Peredur, "is that Arthur yonder?" "What wouldst thou with Arthur?" asked Kai. "My mother told me to go to Arthur, and receive the honour of knighthood." "By my faith," said he, "thou art all too meanly equipped with horse and with arms." Thereupon he was perceived by all the household, and they threw sticks at him. Then, behold, a dwarf came forward. He had already been a year at Arthur's Court, both he and a female dwarf. They had craved harbourage of Arthur, and had obtained it; and during the whole year, neither of them had spoken a single word to any one. When the dwarf beheld Peredur, "Haha!" said he, "the welcome of Heaven be unto thee, goodly Peredur, son of Evrawc, the chief of warriors, and flower of knighthood." "Truly," said Kai, "thou art ill-taught to remain a year mute at Arthur's Court, with choice of society; and now, before the face of Arthur and all his household, to call out, and declare such a man as this the chief of warriors, and the flower of knighthood." And he gave him such a box on the ear that he fell senseless to the ground. Then exclaimed the female dwarf, "Haha! goodly Peredur, son of Evrawc; the welcome of Heaven be unto thee, flower of knights, and light of chivalry." "Of a truth, maiden," said Kai, "thou art ill-bred to remain mute for a year at the Court of Arthur, and then to speak as thou dost of such a man as this." And Kai kicked her with his foot, so that she fell to the ground senseless. "Tall man," said Peredur, "shew me which is Arthur." "Hold thy peace," said Kai, "and go after the knight who went hence to the meadow, and take from him the goblet, and overthrow him, and possess thyself of his horse and arms, and then thou shalt receive the order of knighthood." "I will do so, tall man," said Peredur. So he turned his horse's head towards the meadow. And when he came there, the knight was riding up and down, proud of his strength, and valour, and noble mien. "Tell me," said the knight, "didst thou see any one coming after me from the Court?" "The tall man that was there," said he, "desired me to come, and overthrow thee, and to take from thee the goblet, and thy horse and thy armour for myself." "Silence!" said the knight; "go back to the Court, and tell Arthur, from me, either to come himself, or to send some other to fight with me; and unless he do so quickly, I will not wait for him." "By my faith," said Peredur, "choose thou whether it shall be willingly or unwillingly, but I will have the horse, and the arms, and the goblet." And upon this the knight ran at him furiously, and struck him a violent blow with the shaft of his spear, between the neck and the shoulder. "Haha! lad," said Peredur, "my mother's servants were not used to play with me in this wise; therefore, thus will I play with thee." And thereupon he struck him with a sharp-pointed fork, and it hit him in the eye, and came out at the back of his neck, so that he instantly fell down lifeless.

"Verily," said Owain the son of Urien to Kai, "thou wert ill-

advised, when thou didst send that madman after the knight. For one of two things must befall him. He must either be overthrown, or slain. If he is overthrown by the knight, he will be counted by him to be an honourable person of the Court, and an eternal disgrace will it be to Arthur and his warriors. And if he is slain, the disgrace will be the same, and moreover, his sin will be upon him; therefore will I go to see what has befallen him." So Owain went to the meadow, and he found Peredur dragging the man about. "What art thou doing thus?" said Owain. "This iron coat," said Peredur, "will never come from off him; not by my efforts, at any rate." And Owain unfastened his armour and his clothes. "Here, my good soul," said he, "is a horse and armour better than thine. Take them joyfully, and come with me to Arthur, to receive the order of knighthood, for thou dost merit it." "May I never shew my face again if I go," said Peredur; "but take thou the goblet to Gwenhwyvar, and tell Arthur, that wherever I am, I will be his vassal, and will do him what profit and service I am able. And say that I will not come to his Court until I have encountered the tall man that is there, to revenge the injury he did to the dwarf and dwarfess." And Owain went back to the Court, and related all these things to Arthur and Gwenhwyvar, and to all the household.

And Peredur rode forward. And as he proceeded, behold a knight met him. "Whence comest thou?" said the knight. "I come from Arthur's Court," said Peredur. "Art thou one of his men?" asked he. "Yes, by my faith," he answered. "A good service, truly, is that of Arthur." "Wherefore sayest thou so?" said Peredur. "I will tell thee," said he; "I have always been Arthur's enemy, and all such of his men as I have ever encountered I have slain." And without further parlarce they fought, and it was not long before Peredur brought him to the ground, over his horse's crupper. Then the knight besought his mercy. "Mercy thou shalt have," said Peredur, "if thou wilt make oath to me, that thou wilt go to Arthur's Court, and tell him that it was I that overthrew thee, for the honour of his service; and say, that I will never come to the Court until I have avenged the insult offered to the dwarf and dwarfess." The knight pledged him his faith of this, and proceeded to the Court of Arthur, and said as he had promised, and conveyed the threat to Kai.

And Peredur rode forward. And within that week he encountered sixteen knights, and overthrew them all shamefully. And they all went to Arthur's Court, taking with them the same message which the first knight had conveyed from Peredur, and the same threat which he had sent to Kai. And thereupon Kai was reproved by Arthur; and Kai was greatly grieved thereat.

And Peredur rode forward. And he came to a vast and desert wood, on the confines of which was a lake. And on the other side was a fair castle. And on the border of the lake he saw a venerable, hoary-headed man, sitting upon a velvet cushion, and having a garment of velvet upon him. And his attendants were fishing in the lake. When the hoary-headed man beheld Peredur approaching, he arose and went towards the castle. And the old man was lame. Peredur rode to the palace, and the door was open, and he entered the hall. And there was the hoary-headed man sitting on a cushion, and a large blazing fire burning before him. And the household and the company arose to meet Peredur, and disarrayed him. And the man asked the youth to sit on the cushion; and they sat down, and conversed together. When it was time, the tables were laid, and they went to meat. And when they had finished their meal, the man inquired of Peredur if he knew well how to fight with the sword. "I know not," said Peredur, "but were I to be taught, doubtless I should." "Whoever can play well with the cudgel and shield, will also be able to fight with a sword." And the man had two sons; the one had yellow hair, and the other auburn. "Arise, youths," said he, "and play with the cudgel and the shield." And so did they. "Tell me, my soul," said the man, "which of the youths thinkest thou plays best." "I think," said Peredur, "that the yellow-haired youth could draw blood from the other, if he chose." "Arise thou, my life, and take the cudgel and the shield from the hand of the youth with the auburn hair, and draw blood from the yellow-haired youth if thou canst." So Peredur arose, and went to play with the yellow-haired youth; and he lifted up his arm, and struck him such a mighty blow, that

his brow fell over his eye, and the blood flowed forth. "Ah, my life," said the man, "come now, and sit down, for thou wilt become the best fighter with the sword of any in this island; and I am thy uncle, thy mother's brother. And with me shalt thou remain a space, in order to learn the manners and customs of different countries, and courtesy, and gentleness, and noble bearing. Leave, then, the habits and the discourse of thy mother, and I will be thy teacher; and I will raise thee to the rank of knight from this time forward. And thus do thou. If thou seest aught to cause thee wonder, ask not the meaning of it; if no one has the courtesy to inform thee, the reproach will not fall upon thee, but upon me that am thy teacher." And they had abundance of honour and service. And when it was time they went to sleep. At the break of day, Peredur arose, and took his horse, and with his uncle's permission he rode forth. And he came to a vast desert wood, and at the further end of the wood was a meadow, and on the other side of the meadow he saw a large castle. And thitherward Peredur bent his way, and he found the gate open, and he proceeded to the hall. And he beheld a stately hoary-headed man sitting on one side of the hall, and many pages around him, who arose to receive and to honour Peredur. And they placed him by the side of the owner of the palace. Then they discoursed together; and when it was time to eat, they caused Peredur to sit beside the nobleman during the repast. And when they had eaten and drunk as much as they desired, the nobleman asked Peredur whether he could fight with a sword? "Were I to receive instruction," said Peredur, "I think I could." Now, there was on the floor of the hall a huge staple, as large as a warrior could grasp. "Take yonder sword," said the man to Peredur, "and strike the iron staple." So Peredur arose and struck the staple, so that he cut it in two; and the sword broke into two parts also. "Place the two parts together, and reunite them," and Peredur placed them together, and they became entire as they were before. And a second time he struck upon the staple, so that both it and the sword broke in two, and as before they reunited. And the third time he gave a like blow, and placed the broken parts together, and neither the staple nor the sword would unite as before. "Youth," said the nobleman, "come now, and sit down, and my blessing be upon thee. Thou fighest best with the sword of any man in the kingdom. Thou hast arrived at two-thirds of thy strength, and the other third thou hast not yet obtained; and when thou attainest to thy full power, none will be able to contend with thee. I am thy uncle, thy mother's brother, and I am brother to the man in whose house thou wast last night." Then Peredur and his uncle discoursed together, and he beheld two youths enter the hall, and proceed up to the chamber, bearing a spear of mighty size, with three streams of blood flowing from the point to the ground. And when all the company saw this, they began wailing and lamenting. But for all that, the man did not break off his discourse with Peredur. And as he did not tell Peredur the meaning of what he saw, he forbore to ask him concerning it. And when the clamour had a little subsided, behold two maidens entered, with a large salver between them, in which was a man's head, surrounded by a profusion of blood. And thereupon the company of the court made so great an outcry, that it was irksome to be in the same hall with them. But at length they were silent. And when time was that they should sleep, Peredur was brought into a fair chamber.

And the next day, with his uncle's permission, he rode forth. And he came to a wood, and far within the wood he heard a loud cry, and he saw a beautiful woman with auburn hair, and a horse with a saddle upon it, standing near her, and a corpse by her side. And as she strove to place the corpse upon the horse, it fell to the ground, and thereupon she made a great lamentation. "Tell me, sister," said Peredur, "wherefore art thou bewailing?" "Oh! accursed Peredur, little pity has my ill-fortune ever met with from thee." "Wherefore," said Peredur, "am I accursed?" "Because thou wast the cause of thy mother's death; for when thou didst ride forth against her will, anguish seized upon her heart, so that she died; and therefore art thou accursed. And the dwarf and the dwarfess that thou sawest at Arthur's Court were the dwarfs of thy father and mother; and I am thy foster-sister, and this was my wedded husband, and he was slain by the knight that is in the glade in the wood; and do not thou go near him, lest thou

shouldst be slain by him likewise." "My sister, thou dost reproach me wrongfully; through my having so long remained amongst you, I shall scarcely vanquish him; and had I continued longer, it would, indeed, be difficult for me to succeed. Cease, therefore, thy lamenting, for it is of no avail, and I will bury the body, and then I will go in quest of the knight, and see if I can do vengeance upon him." And when he had buried the body, they went to the place where the knight was, and found him riding proudly along the glade; and he inquired of Peredur whence he came. "I come from Arthur's Court." "And art thou one of Arthur's men?" "Yes, by my faith." "A profitable alliance, truly, is that of Arthur." And without further parance, they encountered one another, and immediately Peredur overthrew the knight, and he besought mercy of Peredur. "Mercy shalt thou have," said he, "upon these terms, that thou take this woman in marriage, and do her all the honour and reverence in thy power, seeing thou hast, without cause, slain her wedded husband; and that thou go to Arthur's Court, and shew him that it was I that overthrew thee, to do him honour and service; and that thou tell him that I will never come to his Court again until I have met with the tall man that is there, to take vengeance upon him for his insult to the dwarf and dwarfess." And he took the knight's assurance, that he would perform all this. Then the knight provided the lady with a horse and garments that were suitable for her, and took her with him to Arthur's Court. And he told Arthur all that had occurred, and gave the defiance to Kai. And Arthur and all his household reproved Kai, for having driven such a youth as Peredur from his Court.

Said Owain the son of Urien, "This youth will never come into the Court until Kai has gone forth from it." "By my faith," said Arthur, "I will search all the deserts in the Island of Britain, until I find Peredur, and then let him and his adversary do their utmost to each other."

Then Peredur rode forward. And he came to a desert wood, where he saw not the track either of men or animals, and where there was nothing but bushes and weeds. And at the upper end of the wood he saw a vast castle, wherein were many strong towers; and when he came near the gate, he found the weeds taller than he had seen them elsewhere. And he struck the gate with the shaft of his lance, and thereupon behold a lean, auburn-haired youth came to an opening in the battlements. "Choose thou, chieftain," said he, "whether shall I open the gate unto thee, or shall I announce unto those that are chief, that thou art at the gateway?" "Say that I am here," said Peredur, "and if it is desired that I should enter, I will go in." And the youth came back, and opened the gate for Peredur. And when he went into the hall, he beheld eighteen youths, lean and red-headed, of the same height, and of the same aspect, and of the same dress, and of the same age as the one who had opened the gate for him. And they were well skilled in courtesy and in service. And they disarrayed him. Then they sat down to discourse. Thereupon, behold five maidens came from the chamber into the hall. And Peredur was certain that he had never seen another of so fair an aspect as the chief of the maidens. And she had an old garment of satin upon her, which had once been handsome, but was then so tattered, that her skin could be seen through it. And whiter was her skin than the bloom of crystal, and her hair and her two eyebrows were blacker than jet, and on her cheeks were two red spots, redder than whatever is reddest. And the maiden welcomed Peredur, and put her arms about his neck, and made him sit down beside her. Not long after this he saw two nuns enter, and a flask full of wine was borne by one, and six loaves of white bread by the other. "Lady," said they, "Heaven is witness, that there is not so much of food and liquor as this left in yonder Convent this night." Then they went to meat, and Peredur observed that the maiden wished to give more of the food and of the liquor to him than to any of the others. "My sister," said Peredur, "I will share out the food and the liquor." "Not so, my soul," said she. "By my faith but I will." So Peredur took the bread, and he gave an equal portion of it to each alike, as well as a cup full of the liquor. And when it was time for them to sleep, a chamber was prepared for Peredur, and he went to rest.

"Behold, sister," said the youths to the fairest and most exalted of the maidens, "we have counsel for thee." "What may it be?" she inquired. "Go to the youth that is in the upper chamber, and

offer to become his wife, or the lady of his love, if it seem well to him." "That were indeed unfitting," said she. "Hitherto I have not been the lady-love of any knight, and to make him such an offer before I am wooed by him, that, truly, can I not do." "By our confession to Heaven, unless thou actest thus, we will leave thee here to thy enemies, to do as they will with thee." And through fear of this, the maiden went forth; and shedding tears, she proceeded to the chamber. And with the noise of the door opening, Peredur awoke; and the maiden was weeping and lamenting. "Tell me, my sister," said Peredur, "wherefore dost thou weep?" "I will tell thee, lord," said she. "My father possessed these dominions as their chief, and this palace was his, and with it he held the best earldom in the kingdom; then the son of another earl sought me of my father, and I was not willing to be given unto him, and my father would not give me against my will, either to him or any earl in the world. And my father had no child except myself. And after my father's death, these dominions came into my own hands, and then was I less willing to accept him than before. So he made war upon me, and conquered all my possessions, except this one house. And through the valour of the men whom thou hast seen, who are my foster-brothers, and the strength of the house, it can never be taken while food and drink remain. And now our provisions are exhausted; but, as thou hast seen, we have been fed by the nuns, to whom the country is free. And at length they also are without supply of food or liquor. And at no later date than to-morrow, the earl will come against this place with all his forces; and if I fall into his power, my fate will be no better than to be given over to the grooms of his horses. Therefore, lord, I am come to offer to place myself in thy hands, that thou mayest succour me, either by taking me hence, or by defending me here, whichever may seem best unto thee." "Go, my sister," said he, "and sleep; nor will I depart from thee until I do that which thou requirest, or prove whether I can assist thee or not." The maiden went again to rest; and the next morning she came to Peredur, and saluted him. "Heaven prosper thee, my soul, and what tidings dost thou bring?" "None other, than that the earl and all his forces have alighted at the gate, and I never beheld any place so covered with tents, and thronged with knights challenging others to the combat." "Truly," said Peredur, "let my horse be made ready." So his horse was accoutred, and he arose and sallied forth to the meadow. And there was a knight riding proudly along the meadow, having raised the signal for battle. And they encountered, and Peredur threw the knight over his horse's crupper to the ground. And at the close of the day, one of the chief knights came to fight with him, and he overthrew him also, so that he besought his mercy. "Who art thou?" said Peredur. "Verily," said he, "I am Master of the Household to the earl." "And how much of the countess's possessions is there in thy power?" "The third part, verily," answered he. "Then," said Peredur, "restore to her the third of her possessions in full, and all the profit thou hast made by them, and bring meat and drink for a hundred men, with their horses and arms, to her court this night. And thou shalt remain her captive, unless she wish to take thy life." And this he did forthwith. And that night the maiden was right joyful, and they fared plentifully.

And the next day Peredur rode forth to the meadow; and that day he vanquished a multitude of the host. And at the close of the day, there came a proud and stately knight, and Peredur overthrew him, and he besought his mercy. "Who art thou?" said Peredur. "I am Steward of the Palace," said he. "And how much of the maiden's possessions are under thy control?" "One-third part," answered he. "Verily," said Peredur, "thou shalt fully restore to the maiden her possessions, and, moreover, thou shalt give her meat and drink for two hundred men, and their horses and their arms. And for thyself, thou shalt be her captive." And immediately it was so done.

And the third day Peredur rode forth to the meadow; and he vanquished more that day than on either of the preceding. And at the close of the day, an earl came to encounter him, and he overthrew him, and he besought his mercy. "Who art thou?" said Peredur. "I am the earl," said he. "I will not conceal it from thee." "Verily," said Peredur, "thou shalt restore the whole of the maiden's earldom, and shalt give her thine own earldom in addition thereto,

and meat and drink for three hundred men, and their horses and arms, and thou thyself shalt remain in her power." And thus it was fulfilled. And Peredur tarried three weeks in the country, causing tribute and obedience to be paid to the maiden, and the government to be placed in her hands. "With thy leave," said Peredur, "I will go hence." "Verily, my brother, desirest thou this?" "Yes, by my faith; and had it not been for love of thee, I should not have been here thus long." "My soul," said she, "who art thou?" "I am Peredur the son of Evrawc from the North; and if ever thou art in trouble or in danger, acquaint me therewith, and if I can, I will protect thee."

So Peredur rode forth. And far thence there met him a lady, mounted on a horse that was lean, and covered with sweat; and she saluted the youth. "Whence comest thou, my sister?" Then she told him the cause of her journey. Now she was the wife of the Lord of the Glade. "Behold," said he, "I am the knight through whom thou art in trouble, and he shall repent it, who has treated thee thus." Thereupon, behold a knight rode up, and he inquired of Peredur, if he had seen a knight such as he was seeking. "Hold thy peace," said Peredur, "I am he whom thou seekest; and by my faith, thou deservest ill of thy household for thy treatment of the maiden, for she is innocent concerning me." So they encountered, and they were not long in combat ere Peredur overthrew the knight, and he besought his mercy. "Mercy thou shalt have," said Peredur, "so thou wilt return by the way thou camest, and declare that thou holdest the maiden innocent, and so that thou wilt acknowledge unto her the reverse thou hast sustained at my hands." And the knight plighted him his faith thereto.

Then Peredur rode forward. And above him he beheld a castle, and thitherward he went. And he struck upon the gate with his lance, and then, behold, a comely auburn-haired youth opened the gate, and he had the stature of a warrior, and the years of a boy. And when Peredur came into the hall, there was a tall and stately lady sitting in a chair, and many handmaidens around her; and the lady rejoiced at his coming. And when it was time, they went to meat. And after their repast was finished, "It were well for thee, chieftain," said she, "to go elsewhere to sleep." "Wherefore can I not sleep here?" said Peredur. "Nine sorceresses are here, my soul, of the sorceresses of Gloucester, and their father and their mother are with them; and unless we can make our escape before daybreak, we shall be slain; and already they have conquered and laid waste all the country, except this one dwelling." "Behold," said Peredur, "I will remain here to-night, and if you are in trouble, I will do you what service I can; but harm shall you not receive from me." So they went to rest. And with the break of day, Peredur heard a dreadful outcry. And he hastily arose, and went forth in his vest and his doublet, with his sword about his neck, and he saw a sorceress overtake one of the watch, who cried out violently. Peredur attacked the sorceress, and struck her upon the head with his sword, so that he flattened her helmet and her head-piece like a dish upon her head. "Thy mercy, goodly Peredur, son of Evrawc, and the mercy of Heaven." "How knowest thou, hag, that I am Peredur?" "By destiny, and the foreknowledge that I should suffer harm from thee. And thou shalt take a horse and armour of me; and with me thou shalt go to learn chivalry and the use of thy arms." Said Peredur, "Thou shalt have mercy, if thou pledge thy faith thou wilt never more injure the dominions of the Countess." And Peredur took surety of this, and with permission of the Countess, he set forth with the sorceress to the palace of the sorceresses. And there he remained for three weeks, and then he made choice of a horse and arms, and went his way.

And in the evening he entered a valley, and at the head of the valley he came to a hermit's cell, and the hermit welcomed him gladly, and there he spent the night. And in the morning he arose, and when he went forth, behold a shower of snow had fallen the night before, and a hawk had killed a wild fowl in front of the cell. And the noise of the horse scared the hawk away, and a raven alighted upon the bird. And Peredur stood, and compared the blackness of the raven and the whiteness of the snow, and the redness of the blood, to the hair of the lady that best he loved, which was blacker than jet, and to her skin which was whiter than the snow, and to the two red spots upon her cheeks, which were redder than the blood upon the snow appeared to be.

Now Arthur and his household were in search of Peredur. "Know ye," said Arthur, "who is the knight with the long spear that stands by the brook up yonder?" "Lord," said one of them, "I will go and learn who he is." So the youth came to the place where Peredur was, and asked him what he did thus, and who he was. And from the intensity with which he thought upon the lady whom best he loved, he gave him no answer. Then the youth thrust at Peredur with his lance, and Peredur turned upon him, and struck him over his horse's crupper to the ground. And after this, four-and-twenty youths came to him, and he did not answer one more than another, but gave the same reception to all, bringing them with one single thrust to the ground. And then came Kai, and spoke to Peredur rudely and angrily; and Peredur took him with his lance under the jaw, and cast him from him with a thrust, so that he broke his arm and his shoulder-blade, and he rode over him one-and-twenty times. And while he lay thus, stunned with the violence of the pain that he had suffered, his horse returned back at a wild and prancing pace. And when the household saw the horse come back without his rider, they rode forth in haste to the place where the encounter had been. And when they first came there, they thought that Kai was slain; but they found that if he had a skilful physician, he yet might live. And Peredur moved not from his meditation, on seeing the concourse that was around Kai. And Kai was brought to Arthur's tent, and Arthur caused skilful physicians to come to him. And Arthur was grieved that Kai had met with this reverse, for he loved him greatly.

"Then," said Gwalchmai, "it is not fitting that any should disturb an honourable knight from his thought unadvisedly; for either he is pondering some damage that he has sustained, or he is thinking of the lady whom best he loves. And through such ill-advised proceeding, perchance this misadventure has befallen him who last met with him. And if it seem well to thee, lord, I will go and see if this knight hath changed from his thought; and if he has, I will ask him courteously to come and visit thee." Then Kai was wroth, and he spoke angry and spiteful words. "Gwalchmai," said he, "I know that thou wilt bring him because he is fatigued. Little praise and honour, nevertheless, wilt thou have from vanquishing a weary knight, who is tired with fighting. Yet thus hast thou gained the advantage over many. And while thy speech and thy soft words last, a coat of thin linen were armour sufficient for thee, and thou wilt not need to break either lance or sword in fighting with the knight in the state he is in." Then said Gwalchmai to Kai, "Thou mightest use more pleasant words, wert thou so minded: and it behoves thee not upon me to wreak thy wrath and thy displeasure. Methinks I shall bring the knight hither with me without breaking either my arm or my shoulder." Then said Arthur to Gwalchmai, "Thou speakest like a wise and prudent man; go, and take enough of armour about thee, and choose thy horse." And Gwalchmai accoutred himself and rode forward hastily to the place where Peredur was.

And Peredur was resting on the shaft of his spear, pondering the same thought, and Gwalchmai came to him without any signs of hostility, and said to him, "If I thought that it would be as agreeable to thee as it would be to me, I would converse with thee. I have also a message from Arthur unto thee, to pray thee to come and visit him. And two men have been before on this errand." "That is true," said Peredur, "and uncourteously they came. They attacked me, and I was annoyed thereat, for it was not pleasing to me to be drawn from the thought that I was in, for I was thinking of the lady whom best I love, and thus was she brought to my mind:—I was looking upon the snow, and upon the raven, and upon the drops of the blood of the bird that the hawk had killed upon the snow. And I bethought me that her whiteness was like that of the snow, and that the blackness of her hair and her eyebrows like that of the raven, and that the two red spots upon her cheeks were like the two drops of blood." Said Gwalchmai, "This was not an ungentle thought, and I should marvel if it were pleasant to thee to be drawn from it." "Tell me," said Peredur, "is Kai in Arthur's Court?" "He is," said he, "and behold he is the knight that fought with thee last; and it would have been better for him had he not come, for his arm and his shoulder-blade were broken with the fall which he had from thy spear." "Verily," said

Peredur, "I am not sorry to have thus begun to avenge the insult to the dwarf and dwarfess." Then Gwalchmai marvelled to hear him speak of the dwarf and the dwarfess; and he approached him, and threw his arms around his neck, and asked him what was his name. "Peredur the son of Evrawc am I called," said he; "and thou, Who art thou?" "I am called Gwalchmai," he replied. "I am right glad to meet with thee," said Peredur, "for in every country where I have been I have heard of thy fame for prowess and uprightness, and I solicit thy fellowship." "Thou shalt have it, by my faith, and grant me thine," said he, "Gladly will I do so," answered Peredur.

So they rode forth together joyfully towards the place where Arthur was, and when Kai saw them coming, he said, "I knew that Gwalchmai needed not to fight the knight. And it is no wonder that he should gain fame; more can he do by his fair words than I by the strength of my arm." And Peredur went with Gwalchmai to his tent, and they took off their armour. And Peredur put on garments like those that Gwalchmai wore, and they went together unto Arthur, and saluted him. "Behold, lord," said Gwalchmai, "him whom thou hast sought so long." "Welcome unto thee, chieftain," said Arthur. "With me thou shalt remain; and had I known thy valour had been such, thou shouldst not have left me as thou didst; nevertheless, this was predicted of thee by the dwarf and the dwarfess, whom Kai ill-treated and whom thou hast avenged." And hereupon, behold there came the Queen and her handmaidens, and Peredur saluted them. And they were rejoiced to see him, and bade him welcome. And Arthur did him great honour and respect, and they returned towards Caerlleon.

And the first night Peredur came to Caerlleon to Arthur's Court, and as he walked in the city after his repast, behold, there met him Angharad Law Eurawc. "By my faith, sister," said Peredur, "thou art a beauteous and lovely maiden; and, were it pleasing to thee, I could love thee above all women." "I pledge my faith," said she, "that I do not love thee, nor will I ever do so." "I also pledge my faith," said Peredur, "that I will never speak a word to any Christian again, until thou come to love me above all men."

The next day Peredur went forth by the high road, along a mountain-ridge, and he saw a valley of a circular form, the confines of which were rocky and wooded. And the flat part of the valley was in meadows, and there were fields betwixt the meadows and the wood. And in the bosom of the wood he saw large black houses of uncouth workmanship. And he dismounted, and led his horse towards the wood. And a little way within the wood he saw a rocky ledge, along which the road lay. And upon the ledge was a lion bound by a chain, and sleeping. And beneath the lion he saw a deep pit of immense size, full of the bones of men and animals. And Peredur drew his sword and struck the lion, so that he fell into the mouth of the pit and hung there by the chain; and with a second blow he struck the chain and broke it, and the lion fell into the pit; and Peredur led his horse over the rocky ledge, until he came into the valley. And in the centre of the valley he saw a fair castle, and he went towards it. And in the meadow by the castle he beheld a huge grey man sitting, who was larger than any man he had ever before seen. And two young pages were shooting the hilts of their daggers, of the bone of the sea-horse. And one of the pages had red hair, and the other auburn. And they went before him to the place where the grey man was, and Peredur saluted him. And the grey man said, "Disgrace to the beard of my porter." Then Peredur understood that the porter was the lion.—And the grey man and the pages went together into the castle, and Peredur accompanied them; and he found it a fair and noble place. And they proceeded to the hall, and the tables were already laid, and upon them was abundance of food and liquor. And thereupon he saw an aged woman and a young woman come from the chamber; and they were the most stately women he had ever seen. Then they washed and went to meat, and the grey man sat in the upper seat at the head of the table, and the aged woman next to him. And Peredur and the maiden were placed together, and the two young pages served them. And the maiden gazed sorrowfully upon Peredur, and Peredur asked the maiden wherefore she was sad. "For thee, my soul; for, from when I first beheld thee, I have loved thee above all men. And it pains me to know that so gentle a youth as thou should have such a doom as awaits thee to-morrow. Sawest thou the numerous black houses in the

bosom of the wood? All these belong to the vassals of the grey man yonder, who is my father. And they are all giants. And tomorrow they will rise up against thee, and will slay thee. And the Round Valley is this valley called." "Listen, fair maiden, wilt thou contrive that my horse and arms be in the same lodging with me to-night?" "Gladly will I cause it so to be, by Heaven, if I can."

And when it was time for them to sleep rather than to carouse, they went to rest. And the maiden caused Peredur's horse and arms to be in the same lodging with him. And the next morning Peredur heard a great tumult of men and horses around the castle. And Peredur arose, and armed himself and his horse, and went to the meadow. Then the aged woman and the maiden came to the grey man: "Lord," said they, "take the word of the youth, that he will never disclose what he has seen in this place, and we will be his sureties that he keep it." "I will not do so, by my faith," said the grey man. So Peredur fought with the host, and towards evening he had slain the one-third of them without receiving any hurt himself. Then said the aged woman, "Behold, many of thy host have been slain by the youth; do thou, therefore, grant him mercy." "I will not grant it, by my faith," said he. And the aged woman and the fair maiden were upon the battlements of the castle, looking forth. And at that juncture, Peredur encountered the yellow-haired youth and slew him. "Lord," said the maiden, "grant the young man mercy." "That will I not do, by Heaven," he replied; and thereupon Peredur attacked the auburn-haired youth, and slew him likewise. "It were better that thou hadst accorded mercy to the youth before he had slain thy two sons; for now scarcely wilt thou thyself escape from him." "Go, maiden, and beseech the youth to grant mercy unto us, for we yield ourselves into his hands." So the maiden came to the place where Peredur was, and besought mercy for her father, and for all such of his vassals as had escaped alive. "Thou shalt have it, on condition that thy father and all that are under him go and render homage to Arthur, and tell him that it was his vassal Peredur that did him this service." "This will we do willingly, by Heaven." "And you shall also receive baptism; and I will send to Arthur, and beseech him to bestow this valley upon thee and upon thy heirs after thee for ever." Then they went in, and the grey man and the tall woman saluted Peredur. And the grey man said unto him, "Since I have possessed this valley I have not seen any Christian depart with his life, save thyself. And we will go to do homage to Arthur, and to embrace the faith and be baptized." Then said Peredur, "To Heaven I render thanks that I have not broken my vow to the lady that best I love, which was, that I would not speak one word unto any Christian."

That night they tarried there. And the next day, in the morning, the grey man, with his company, set forth to Arthur's Court; and they did homage unto Arthur, and he caused them to be baptized. And the grey man told Arthur that it was Peredur that had vanquished them. And Arthur gave the valley to the grey man and his company, to hold it of him as Peredur had besought. And with Arthur's permission, the grey man went back to the Round Valley.

Peredur rode forward next day, and he traversed a vast tract of desert, in which no dwellings were. And at length he came to a habitation, mean and small. And there he heard that there was a serpent that lay upon a gold ring, and suffered none to inhabit the country for seven miles around. And Peredur came to the place where he heard the serpent was. And angrily, furiously, and desperately fought he with the serpent; and at last he killed it, and took away the ring. And thus he was for a long time without speaking a word to any Christian. And therefrom he lost his colour and his aspect, through extreme longing after the Court of Arthur, and the society of the lady whom best he loved, and of his companions. Then he proceeded forward to Arthur's Court, and on the road there met him Arthur's household going on a particular errand, with Kai at their head. And Peredur knew them all, but none of the household recognized him. "Whence comest thou, chieftain?" said Kai. And this he asked him twice and three times, and he answered him not. And Kai thrust him through the thigh with his lance. And lest he should be compelled to speak, and to break his vow, he went on without stopping. "Then," said Gwalchmai, "I declare to Heaven, Kai, that thou hast acted ill in commit-

ting such an outrage on a youth like this, who cannot speak."

And Gwalchmai returned back to Arthur's Court. "Lady," said he to Gwenhwyvar, "seest thou how wicked an outrage Kai has committed upon this youth who cannot speak; for Heaven's sake, and for mine, cause him to have medical care before I come back, and I will repay thee the charge."

And before the men returned from their errand, a knight came to the meadow beside Arthur's Palace, to dare some one to the encounter. And his challenge was accepted; and Peredur fought with him, and overthrew him. And for a week he overthrew one knight every day.

And one day, Arthur and his household were going to Church, and they beheld a knight who had raised the signal for combat. "Verily," said Arthur, "by the valour of men, I will not go hence until I have my horse and my arms to overthrow yonder boor." Then went the attendants to fetch Arthur's horse and arms. And Peredur met the attendants as they were going back, and he took the horse and arms from them, and proceeded to the meadow; and all those who saw him arise and go to do battle with the knight, went upon the tops of the houses, and the mounds, and the high places, to behold the combat. And Peredur beckoned with his hand to the knight to commence the fight. And the knight thrust at him, but he was not thereby moved from where he stood. And Peredur spurred his horse, and ran at him wrathfully, furiously, fiercely, desperately, and with mighty rage, and he gave him a thrust, deadly-wounding, severe, furious, adroit, and strong, under his jaw, and raised him out of his saddle, and cast him a long way from him. And Peredur went back, and left the horse and the arms with the attendant as before, and he went on foot to the Palace.

Then Peredur went by the name of the Dumb Youth. And behold, Angharad Law Eurawc met him. "I declare to Heaven, chieftain," said she, "woful is it that thou canst not speak; for couldst thou speak, I would love thee best of all men; and by my faith, although thou canst not, I do love thee above all." "Heaven reward thee, my sister," said Peredur, "by my faith I also do love thee." Thereupon it was known that he was Peredur. And then he held fellowship with Gwalchmai, and Owain the son of Urien, and all the household, and he remained in Arthur's Court.

Arthur was in Caerlleon upon Usk; and he went to hunt, and Peredur went with him. And Peredur let loose his dog upon a hart, and the dog killed the hart in a desert place. And a short space from him he saw signs of a dwelling, and towards the dwelling he went, and he beheld a hall, and at the door of the hall he found bald swarthy youths playing at chess. And when he entered, he beheld three maidens sitting on a bench, and they were all clothed alike, as became persons of high rank. And he came, and sat by them upon the bench; and one of the maidens looked steadfastly upon Peredur, and wept. And Peredur asked her wherefore she was weeping. "Through grief, that I should see so fair a youth as thou art, slain." "Who will slay me?" inquired Peredur. "If thou art so daring as to remain here to-night, I will tell thee." "How great soever my danger may be from remaining here, I will listen unto thee." "This Palace is owned by him who is my father," said the maiden, "and he slays every one who comes hither without his leave." "What sort of a man is thy father, that he is able to slay every one thus?" "A man who does violence and wrong unto his neighbours, and who renders justice unto none." And hereupon he saw the youths arise and clear the chessmen from the board. And he heard a great tumult; and after the tumult there came in a huge black one-eyed man, and the maidens arose to meet him. And they disarrayed him, and he went and sat down; and after he had rested and pondered awhile, he looked at Peredur, and asked who the knight was. "Lord," said one of the maidens, "he is the fairest and gentlest youth that ever thou didst see. And for the sake of Heaven, and of thine own dignity, have patience with him." "For thy sake I will have patience, and I will grant him his life this night." Then Peredur came towards them to the fire, and partook of food and liquor, and entered into discourse with the ladies. And being elated with the liquor, he said to the black man, "It is a marvel to me, so mighty as thou sayest thou art, who could have put out thine eye." "It is one of my habits," said the black man, "that whosoever puts to me the question which thou

hast asked, shall not escape with his life, either as a free gift or for a price." "Lord," said the maiden, "whatsoever he may say to thee in jest, and through the excitement of liquor, make good that which thou saidst and didst promise me just now." "I will do so, gladly, for thy sake," said he. "Willingly will I grant him his life this night." And that night thus they remained.

And the next day the black man got up, and put on his armour, and said to Peredur, "Arise, man, and suffer death." And Peredur said unto him, "Do one of two things, black man; if thou wilt fight with me, either throw off thy own armour, or give arms to me, that I may encounter thee." "Ha, man," said he, "couldst thou fight, if thou hadst arms? Take, then, what arms thou dost choose." And thereupon the maiden came to Peredur with such arms as pleased him; and he fought with the black man, and forced him to crave his mercy. "Black man, thou shalt have mercy, provided thou tell me who thou art, and who put out thine eye." "Lord, I will tell thee; I lost it in fighting with the Black Serpent of the Carn. There is a mound, which is called the Mound of Mourning; and on the mound there is a carn, and in the carn there is a serpent, and on the tail of the serpent there is a stone, and the virtues of the stone are such, that whosoever should hold it in one hand, in the other he will have as much gold as he may desire. And in fighting with this serpent was it that I lost my eye. And the Black Oppressor am I called. And for this reason I am called the Black Oppressor, that there is not a single man around me whom I have not oppressed, and justice have I done unto none." "Tell me," said Peredur, "how far is it hence?" "The same day that thou settest forth, thou wilt come to the Palace of the Sons of the King of the Tortures." "Wherefore are they called thus?" "The Addanc of the Lake slays them once every day. When thou goest thence, thou wilt come to the Court of the Countess of the Achievements." "What achievements are there?" asked Peredur. "Three hundred men there are in her household, and unto every stranger that comes to the Court, the achievements of her household are related. And this is the manner of it,—the three hundred men of the household sit next unto the Lady; and that not through disrespect unto the guests, but that they may relate the achievements of the household. And the day that thou goest thence, thou wilt reach the Mound of Mourning, and round about the mound there are the owners of three hundred tents guarding the serpent." "Since thou hast, indeed, been an oppressor so long," said Peredur, "I will cause that thou continue so no longer." So he slew him.

Then the maiden spoke, and began to converse with him. "If thou wast poor when thou camest here, henceforth thou wilt be rich through the treasure of the black man whom thou hast slain. Thou seest the many lovely maidens that there are in this Court; thou shalt have her whom thou best likest for the lady of thy love." "Lady, I came not hither from my country to woo; but match yourselves as it liketh you with the comely youths I see here; and none of your goods do I desire, for I need them not." Then Peredur rode forward, and he came to the Palace of the Sons of the King of the Tortures; and when he entered the Palace, he saw none but women; and they rose up, and were joyful at his coming; and as they began to discourse with him, he beheld a charger arrive, with a saddle upon it, and a corpse in the saddle. And one of the women arose, and took the corpse from the saddle, and anointed it in a vessel of warm water, which was below the door, and placed precious balsam upon it; and the man rose up alive, and came to the place where Peredur was, and greeted him, and was joyful to see him. And two other men came in upon their saddles, and the maiden treated these two in the same manner as she had done the first. Then Peredur asked the chieftain wherefore it was thus. And they told him, that there was an Addanc in a cave, which slew them once every day. And thus they remained that night.

And next morning the youths arose to sally forth, and Peredur besought them, for the sake of the ladies of their love, to permit him to go with them; but they refused him, saying, "If thou shouldst be slain there, thou hast none to bring thee back to life again." And they rode forward, and Peredur followed after them; and, after they had disappeared out of his sight, he came to a mound, whereon sat the fairest lady he had ever beheld. "I know thy quest," said she; "thou art going to encounter the Addanc, and

he will slay thee, and that not by courage, but by craft. He has a cave, and at the entrance of the cave there is a stone pillar, and he sees every one that enters, and none see him; and from behind the pillar he slays every one with a poisonous dart. And if thou wouldst pledge me thy faith to love me above all women, I would give thee a stone, by which thou shouldst see him when thou goest in, and he should not see thee." "I will, by my troth," said Peredur, "for when first I beheld thee I loved thee; and where shall I seek thee?" "When thou seekest me, seek towards India." And the maiden vanished, after placing the stone in Peredur's hand.

And he came towards a valley, through which ran a river; and the borders of the valley were wooded, and on each side of the river were level meadows. And on one side of the river he saw a flock of white sheep, and on the other a flock of black sheep. And whenever one of the white sheep bleated, one of the black sheep would cross over and become white; and when one of the black sheep bleated, one of the white sheep would cross over and become black. And he saw a tall tree by the side of the river, one half of which was in flames from the root to the top, and the other half was green and in full leaf. And nigh thereto he saw a youth sitting upon a mound, and two greyhounds, white-breasted and spotted, in leashes, lying by his side. And certain was he that he had never seen a youth of so royal a bearing as he. And in the wood opposite he heard hounds raising a herd of deer. And Peredur saluted the youth, and the youth greeted him in return. And there were three roads leading from the mound; two of them were wide roads, and the third was more narrow. And Peredur inquired where the three roads went. "One of them goes to my palace," said the youth; "and one of two things I counsel thee to do; either to proceed to my palace, which is before thee, and where thou wilt find my wife, or else to remain here to see the hounds chasing the roused deer from the wood to the plain. And thou shalt see the best greyhounds thou didst ever behold, and the boldest in the chase, kill them by the water beside us; and when it is time to go to meat, my page will come with my horse to meet me, and thou shalt rest in my palace to-night." "Heaven reward thee; but I cannot tarry, for onward must I go." "The other road leads to the town, which is near here, and wherein food and liquor may be bought; and the road which is narrower than the others goes towards the cave of the Addanc." "With thy permission, young man, I will go that way."

And Peredur went towards the cave. And he took the stone in his left hand, and his lance in his right. And as he went in he perceived the Addanc, and he pierced him through with his lance, and cut off his head. And as he came from the cave, behold the three companions were at the entrance; and they saluted Peredur, and told him that there was a prediction that he should slay that monster. And Peredur gave the head to the young men, and they offered him in marriage whichever of the three sisters he might choose, and half their kingdom with her. "I came not hither to woo," said Peredur, "but if peradventure I took a wife, I should prefer your sister to all others." And Peredur rode forward, and he heard a noise behind him. And he looked back, and saw a man upon a red horse, with red armour upon him; and the man rode up by his side, and saluted him, and wished him the favour of Heaven and of man. And Peredur greeted the youth kindly. "Lord, I come to make a request unto thee." "What wouldst thou?" "That thou shouldst take me as thine attendant." "Whom then should I take as my attendant, if I did so?" "I will not conceal from thee what kindred I am of. Etlym Gleddiv Coch am I called, an Earl from the East Country." "I marvel that thou shouldst offer to become attendant to a man whose possessions are no greater than thine own; for I have but an earldom like thyself. But since thou desirest to be my attendant, I will take thee joyfully."

And they went forward to the Court of the Countess, and all they of the Court were glad at their coming; and they were told it was not through disrespect they were placed below the household, but that such was the usage of the Court. For, whoever should overthrow the three hundred men of her household, would sit next the Countess, and she would love him above all men. And Peredur having overthrown the three hundred men of her household, sat down beside her, and the Countess said, "I thank Heaven that I have a youth so fair and so valiant as thou, since I have not

obtained the man whom best I love." "Who is he whom best thou lovest?" "By my faith, Etlym Gledddy Coch is the man whom I love best, and I have never seen him." "Of a truth, Etlym is my companion; and behold here he is, and for his sake did I come to joust with thy household. And he could have done so better than I, had it pleased him. And I do give thee unto him." "Heaven reward thee, fair youth, and I will take the man whom I love above all others." And the Countess became Etlym's bride from that moment.

And the next day Peredur set forth towards the Mound of Mourning. "By thy hand, lord, but I will go with thee," said Etlym. Then they went forwards till they came in sight of the mound and the tents. "Go unto yonder men," said Peredur to Etlym, "and desire them to come and do me homage." So Etlym went unto them, and said unto them thus,—"Come and do homage to my lord." "Who is thy lord?" said they. "Peredur with the long lance is my lord," said Etlym. "Were it permitted to slay a messenger, thou shouldest not go back to thy lord alive, for making unto Kings, and Earls, and Barons so arrogant a demand as to go and do him homage." Peredur desired him to go back to them, and to give them their choice, either to do him homage, or to do battle with him. And they chose rather to do battle. And that day Peredur overthrew the owners of a hundred tents; and the next day he overthrew the owners of a hundred more; and the third day the remaining hundred took counsel to do homage to Peredur. And Peredur inquired of them, wherefore they were there. And they told him they were guarding the serpent until he should die. "For then should we fight for the stone among ourselves, and whoever should be conqueror among us would have the stone." "Await here," said Peredur, "and I will go to encounter the serpent." "Not so, lord," said they; "we will go altogether to encounter the serpent." "Verily," said Peredur, "that will I not permit; for if the serpent be slain, I shall derive no more fame therefrom than one of you." Then he went to the place where the serpent was, and slew it, and came back to them, and said, "Reckon up what you have spent since you have been here, and I will repay you to the full." And he paid to each what he said was his claim. And he required of them only that they should acknowledge themselves his vassals. And he said to Etlym, "Go back unto her whom thou lovest best, and I will go forwards, and I will reward thee for having been my attendant." And he gave Etlym the stone. "Heaven repay thee and prosper thee," said Etlym.

And Peredur rode thence, and he came to the fairest valley he had ever seen, through which ran a river; and there he beheld many tents of various colours. And he marvelled still more at the number of water-mills and of wind-mills that he saw. And there rode up with him a tall auburn-haired man, in workman's garb, and Peredur inquired of him who he was. "I am the chief miller," said he, "of all the mills yonder." "Wilt thou give me lodging?" said Peredur. "I will, gladly," he answered. And Peredur came to the miller's house, and the miller had a fair and pleasant dwelling. And Peredur asked money as a loan from the miller, that he might buy meat and liquor for himself and for the household, and he promised that he would pay him again ere he went thence. And he inquired of the miller, wherefore such a multitude was there assembled. Said the miller to Peredur, "One thing is certain: either thou art a man from afar, or thou art beside thyself. The Empress of Cristinobyl the Great is here; and she will have no one but the man who is most valiant; for riches does she not require. And it was impossible to bring food for so many thousands as are here, therefore were all these mills constructed." And that night they took their rest.

And the next day Peredur arose, and he equipped himself and his horse for the tournament. And among the other tents he beheld one, which was the fairest he had ever seen. And he saw a beauteous maiden leaning her head out of a window of the tent, and he had never seen a maiden more lovely than she. And upon her was a garment of satin. And he gazed fixedly on the maiden, and began to love her greatly. And he remained there, gazing upon the maiden from morning until mid-day, and from mid-day until evening; and then the tournament was ended and he went to his lodging and drew off his armour. Then he asked money of the miller as a loan, and the miller's wife was wroth with Pere-

dur; nevertheless, the miller lent him the money. And the next day he did in like manner as he had done the day before. And at night he came to his lodging, and took money as a loan from the miller. And the third day, as he was in the same place, gazing upon the maiden, he felt a hard blow between the neck and the shoulder, from the edge of an axe. And when he looked behind him, he saw that it was the miller; and the miller said to him, "Do one of two things: either turn thy head from hence, or go to the tournament." And Peredur smiled on the miller, and went to the tournament; and all that encountered him that day he overthrew. And as many as he vanquished he sent as a gift to the Empress, and their horses and arms he sent as a gift to the wife of the miller, in payment of the borrowed money. Peredur attended the tournament until all were overthrown, and he sent all the men to the prison of the Empress, and the horses and arms to the wife of the miller, in payment of the borrowed money. And the Empress sent to the Knight of the Mill, to ask him to come and visit her. And Peredur went not for the first nor for the second message. And the third time she sent a hundred knights to bring him against his will, and they went to him and told him their mission from the Empress. And Peredur fought well with them, and caused them to be bound like stags, and thrown into the mill-dyke. And the Empress sought advice of a wise man who was in her counsel; and he said to her, "With thy permission, I will go to him myself." So he came to Peredur, and saluted him, and besought him, for the sake of the lady of his love, to come and visit the Empress. And they went, together with the miller. And Peredur went and sat down in the outer chamber of the tent, and she came and placed herself by his side. And there was but little discourse between them. And Peredur took his leave, and went to his lodging.

And the next day he came to visit her, and when he came into the tent there was no one chamber less decorated than the others. And they knew not where he would sit. And Peredur went and sat beside the Empress, and discoursed with her courteously. And while they were thus, they beheld a black man enter with a goblet full of wine in his hand. And he dropped upon his knee before the Empress, and besought her to give it to no one who would not fight with him for it. And she looked upon Peredur. "Lady," said he, "bestow on me the goblet." And Peredur drank the wine, and gave the goblet to the miller's wife. And while they were thus, behold there entered a black man of larger stature than the other, with a wild beast's claw in his hand, wrought into the form of a goblet and filled with wine. And he presented it to the Empress, and besought her to give it to no one but the man who would fight with him. "Lady," said Peredur, "bestow it on me." And she gave it to him. And Peredur drank the wine, and sent the goblet to the wife of the miller. And while they were thus, behold a rough-looking, crisp-haired man, taller than either of the others, came in with a bowl in his hand full of wine; and he bent upon his knee, and gave it into the hands of the Empress, and he besought her to give it to none but him who would fight with him for it; and she gave it to Peredur, and he sent it to the miller's wife. And that night Peredur returned to his lodging; and the next day he accoutred himself and his horse, and went to the meadow and slew the three men. Then Peredur proceeded to the tent, and the Empress said to him, "Goodly Peredur, remember the faith thou didst pledge me when I gave thee the stone, and thou didst kill the Addanc." "Lady," answered he, "thou sayest truth, I do remember it." And Peredur was entertained by the Empress fourteen years, as the story relates.

Arthur was at Caerlleon upon Usk, his principal palace; and in the centre of the floor of the hall were four men sitting on a carpet of velvet, Owain the son of Urien, and Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, and Howel the son of Emyr Llydaw, and Peredur of the long lance. And thereupon they saw a black curly-headed maiden enter, riding upon a yellow mule, with jagged thongs in her hand to urge it on; and having a rough and hideous aspect. Blacker were her face and her two hands than the blackest iron covered with pitch; and her hue was not more frightful than her form. High cheeks had she, and a face lengthened downwards, and a short nose with distended nostrils. And one eye was of a piercing mottled grey, and the other was as black as jet, deep-sunk in her head. And her teeth were long and yellow, more yellow were

they than the flower of the broom. And her stomach rose from the breast-bone, higher than her chin. And her back was in the shape of a crook, and her legs were large and bony. And her figure was very thin and spare, except her feet and her legs, which were of huge size. And she greeted Arthur and all his household except Peredur. And to Peredur she spoke harsh and angry words. "Peredur, I greet thee not, seeing that thou dost not merit it. Blind was fate in giving thee fame and favour. When thou wast in the Court of the Lame King, and didst see there the youth bearing the streaming spear, from the points of which were drops of blood flowing in streams, even to the hand of the youth, and many other wonders likewise, thou didst not inquire their meaning nor their cause. Hadst thou done so, the King would have been restored to health, and his dominions to peace. Whereas from henceforth, he will have to endure battles and conflicts, and his knights will perish, and wives will be widowed, and maidens will be left portionless, and all this is because of thee." Then said she unto Arthur, "May it please thee, lord, my dwelling is far hence, in the stately castle of which thou hast heard, and therein are five hundred and sixty-six knights of the order of Chivalry, and the lady whom best he loves with each; and whoever would acquire fame in arms, and encounters, and conflicts, he will gain it there, if he deserve it. And whoso would reach the summit of fame and of honour, I know where he may find it. There is a castle on a lofty mountain, and there is a maiden therein, and she is detained a prisoner there, and whoever shall set her free will attain the summit of the fame of the world." And thereupon she rode away.

Said Gwalchmai, "By my faith, I will not rest tranquilly until I have proved if I can release the maiden." And many of Arthur's household joined themselves with him. Then, likewise, said Peredur, "By my faith, I will not rest tranquilly until I know the story and the meaning of the lance whereof the black maiden spoke." And while they were equipping themselves, behold a knight came to the gate. And he had the size and the strength of a warrior, and was equipped with arms and habiliments. And he went forward, and saluted Arthur and all his household, except Gwalchmai. And the knight had upon his shoulder a shield, ingrained with gold, with a fesse of azure blue upon it, and his whole armour was of the same hue. And he said to Gwalchmai, "Thou didst slay my lord by thy treachery and deceit, and that will I prove upon thee." Then Gwalchmai rose up. "Behold," said he, "here is my gage against thee, to maintain, either in this place or wherever else thou wilt, that I am not a traitor or deceiver." "Before the King whom I obey, will I that my encounter with thee take place," said the knight. "Willingly," said Gwalchmai; "go forward, and I will follow thee." So the knight went forth, and Gwalchmai accoutred himself, and there was offered unto him abundance of armour, but he would take none but his own. And when Gwalchmai and Peredur were equipped, they set forth to follow him, by reason of their fellowship and of the great friendship that was between them. And they did not go after him in company together, but each went his own way.

At the dawn of day Gwalchmai came to a valley, and in the valley he saw a fortress, and within the fortress a vast palace and lofty towers around it. And he beheld a knight coming out to hunt from the other side, mounted on a spirited black snorting palfrey, that advanced at a prancing pace, proudly stepping, and nimbly bounding, and sure of foot; and this was the man to whom the palace belonged. And Gwalchmai saluted him. "Heaven prosper thee, chieftain," said he, "and whence comest thou?" "I come," answered Gwalchmai, "from the Court of Arthur." "And art thou Arthur's vassal?" "Yes, by my faith," said Gwalchmai. "I will give thee good counsel," said the knight. "I see that thou art tired and weary; go unto my palace, if it may please thee, and tarry there to-night." "Willingly, lord," said he, "and Heaven reward thee." "Take this ring as a token to the porter, and go forward to yonder tower, and therein thou wilt find my sister." And Gwalchmai went to the gate, and showed the ring, and proceeded to the tower. And on entering he beheld a large blazing fire, burning without smoke and with a bright and lofty flame, and a beauteous and stately maiden was sitting on a chair by the fire. And the maiden was glad at his coming, and welcomed him, and advanced to meet him. And he went and sat beside the maiden, and they took their

repast. And when their repast was over, they discoursed pleasantly together. And while they were thus, behold there entered a venerable hoary-headed man. "Ah! base girl," said he, "if thou didst think it was right for thee to entertain and to sit by yonder man, thou wouldest not do so." And he withdrew his head, and went forth. "Ah! chieftain," said the maiden, "if thou wilt do as I counsel thee, thou wilt shut the door, lest the man should have a plot against thee." Upon that Gwalchmai arose, and when he came near unto the door, the man, with sixty others, fully armed, were ascending the tower. And Gwalchmai defended the door with a chessboard, that none might enter until the man should return from the chase. And thereupon, behold the Earl arrived. "What is all this?" asked he. "It is a sad thing," said the hoary-headed man; "the young girl yonder has been sitting and eating with him who slew your father. He is Gwalchmai, the son of Gwyar." "Hold thy peace, then," said the Earl, "I will go in." And the Earl was joyful concerning Gwalchmai. "Ha! chieftain," said he, "it was wrong of thee to come to my court, when thou knewest that thou didst slay my father; and though we cannot avenge him, Heaven will avenge him upon thee." "My soul," said Gwalchmai, "thus it is: I came not here either to acknowledge or to deny having slain thy father; but I am on a message from Arthur, and therefore do I crave the space of a year until I shall return from my embassy, and then, upon my faith, I will come back unto this palace, and do one of two things, either acknowledge it, or deny it." And the time was granted him willingly; and he remained there that night. And the next morning he rode forth. And the story relates nothing further of Gwalchmai respecting this adventure.

And Peredur rode forward. And he wandered over the whole island, seeking tidings of the black maiden, and he could meet with none. And he came to an unknown land, in the centre of a valley, watered by a river. And as he traversed the valley he beheld a horseman coming towards him, and wearing the garments of a priest; and he besought his blessing. "Wretched man," said he, "thou meritest no blessing, and thou wouldest not be profited by one, seeing that thou art clad in armour on such a day as this." "And what day is to-day?" said Peredur. "To-day is Good Friday," he answered. "Chide me not that I knew not this, seeing that it is a year to-day since I journeyed forth from my country." Then he dismounted, and led his horse in his hand. And he had not proceeded far along the high road before he came to a cross road, and the cross road traversed a wood. And on the other side of the wood he saw an unfortified castle, which appeared to be inhabited. And at the gate of the castle there met him the priest whom he had seen before, and he asked his blessing. "The blessing of Heaven be unto thee," said he, "it is more fitting to travel in thy present guise than as thou wast erewhile; and this night thou shalt tarry with me." So he remained there that night.

And the next day Peredur sought to go forth. "To-day may no one journey. Thou shalt remain with me to-day and to-morrow, and the day following, and I will direct thee as best I may to the place which thou art seeking." And the fourth day Peredur sought to go forth, and he entreated the priest to tell him how he should find the Castle of Wonders. "What I know thereof I will tell thee," he replied. "Go over yonder mountain, and on the other side of the mountain thou wilt come to a river, and in the valley wherein the river runs is a King's palace, wherein the King sojourned during Easter. And if thou mayest have tidings anywhere of the Castle of Wonders, thou wilt have them there."

Then Peredur rode forward. And he came to the valley in which was the river, and there met him a number of men going to hunt, and in the midst of them was a man of exalted rank, and Peredur saluted him. "Choose, chieftain," said the man, "whether thou wilt go with me to the chase, or wilt proceed to my palace, and I will dispatch one of my household to commend thee to my daughter, who is there, and who will entertain thee with food and liquor until I return from hunting; and whatever may be thine errand, such as I can obtain for thee thou shalt gladly have." And the King sent a little yellow page with him as an attendant; and when they came to the palace the lady had arisen, and was about to wash before meat. Peredur went forward, and she saluted him joyfully, and placed him by her side. And they took their repast. And whatsoever Peredur said unto her, she laughed loudly, so that

all in the palace could hear. Then spoke the yellow page to the lady. "By my faith," said he, "this youth is already thy husband; or if he be not, thy mind and thy thoughts are set upon him." And the little yellow page went unto the King, and told him that it seemed to him that the youth whom he had met with was his daughter's husband, or if he were not so already that he would shortly become so unless he were cautious. "What is thy counsel in this matter, youth?" said the King. "My counsel is," he replied, "that thou set strong men upon him, to seize him, until thou hast ascertained the truth respecting this." So he set strong men upon Peredur, who seized him and cast him into prison. And the maiden went before her father, and asked him wherefore he had caused the youth from Arthur's Court to be imprisoned. "In truth," he answered, "he shall not be free to-night, nor to-morrow, nor the day following, and he shall not come from where he is." She replied not to what the King had said, but she went to the youth. "Is it unpleasant to thee to be here?" said she. "I should not care if I were not," he replied. "Thy couch and thy treatment shall be in no wise inferior to that of the King himself, and thou shalt have the best entertainment that the palace affords. And if it were more pleasing to thee that my couch should be here, that I might discourse with thee, it should be so, cheerfully." "This can I not refuse," said Peredur. And he remained in prison that night. And the maiden provided all that she had promised him.

And the next day Peredur heard a tumult in the town. "Tell me, fair maiden, what is that tumult?" said Peredur. "All the King's hosts and his forces have come to the town to-day." "And what seek they here?" he inquired. "There is an Earl near this place who possesses two Earldoms, and is as powerful as a King; and an engagement will take place between them to-day." "I beseech thee," said Peredur, "to cause a horse and arms to be brought, that I may view the encounter, and I promise to come back to my prison again." "Gladly," said she, "will I provide thee with horse and arms." So she gave him a horse and arms, and a bright scarlet robe of honour over his armour, and a yellow shield upon his shoulder. And he went to the combat; and as many of the Earl's men as encountered him that day he overthrew; and he returned to his prison. And the maiden asked tidings of Peredur, and he answered her not a word. And she went and asked tidings of her father, and inquired who had acquitted himself best of the household. And he said that he knew not, but that it was a man with a scarlet robe of honour over his armour, and a yellow shield upon his shoulder. Then she smiled, and returned to where Peredur was, and did him great honour that night. And for three days did Peredur slay the Earl's men; and before any one could know who he was, he returned to his prison. And the fourth day Peredur slew the Earl himself. And the maiden went unto her father, and inquired of him the news. "I have good news for thee," said the King; "the Earl is slain, and I am the owner of his two Earldoms." "Knowest thou, lord, who slew him?" "I do not know," said the King. "It was the knight with the scarlet robe of honour and the yellow shield." "Lord," said she, "I know who that is." "By Heaven!" he exclaimed, "who is he?" "Lord," she replied, "he is the knight whom thou hast imprisoned." Then he went unto Peredur, and saluted him, and told him that he would reward the service he had done him, in any way he might desire. And when they went to meat, Peredur was placed beside the King, and the maiden on the other side of Peredur. "I will give thee," said the King, "my daughter in marriage, and half my kingdom with her, and the two Earldoms as a gift." "Heaven reward thee, lord," said Peredur, "but I came not here to woo." "What seekest thou then, chieftain?" "I am seeking tidings of the Castle of Wonders." "Thy enterprise is greater, chieftain, than thou wilt wish to pursue," said the maiden, "nevertheless, tidings shalt thou have of the Castle, and thou shalt have a guide through my father's dominions, and a sufficiency of provisions for thy journey, for thou art, O chieftain, the man whom best I love." Then she said to him, "Go over yonder mountain, and thou wilt find a lake, and in the middle of the lake there is a Castle, and that is the Castle that is called the Castle of Wonders; and we know not what wonders are therein, but thus is it called."

And Peredur proceeded towards the Castle, and the gate of the Castle was open. And when he came to the hall, the door

was open, and he entered. And he beheld a chessboard in the hall, and the chessmen were playing against each other, by themselves. And the side that he favoured lost the game, and thereupon the others set up a shout, as though they had been living men. And Peredur was wroth, and took the chessmen in his lap, and cast the chessboard into the lake. And when he had done thus, behold the black maiden came in, and she said to him, "The welcome of Heaven be not unto thee. Thou hadst rather do evil than good." "What complaint hast thou against me, maiden?" said Peredur. "That thou hast occasioned unto the Empress the loss of her chessboard, which she would not have lost for all her empire. And the way in which thou mayest recover the chessboard is, to repair to the Castle of Ysbidinongyl, where is a black man, who lays waste the dominions of the Empress; and if thou canst slay him, thou wilt recover the chessboard. But if thou goest there, thou wilt not return alive." "Wilt thou direct me thither?" said Peredur. "I will show thee the way," she replied. So he went to the Castle of Ysbidinongyl, and he fought with the black man. And the black man besought mercy of Peredur. "Mercy will I grant thee," said he, "on condition that thou cause the chessboard to be restored to the place where it was when I entered the hall." Then the maiden came to him, and said, "The malediction of Heaven attend thee for thy work, since thou hast left that monster alive, who lays waste all the possessions of the Empress." "I granted him his life," said Peredur, "that he might cause the chessboard to be restored." "The chessboard is not in the place where thou didst find it; go back, therefore, and slay him," answered she. So Peredur went back, and slew the black man. And when he returned to the palace, he found the black maiden there. "Ah! maiden," said Peredur, "where is the Empress?" "I declare to Heaven that thou wilt not see her now, unless thou dost slay the monster that is in yonder forest." "What monster is there?" "It is a stag that is as swift as the swiftest bird; and he has one horn in his forehead, as long as the shaft of a spear, and as sharp as whatever is sharpest. And he destroys the branches of the best trees in the forest, and he kills every animal that he meets with therein; and those that he doth not slay perish of hunger. And what is worse than that, he comes every night, and drinks up the fish-pond, and leaves the fishes exposed, so that for the most part they die before the water returns again." "Maiden," said Peredur, "wilt thou come and show me this animal?" "Not so," said the maiden, "for he has not permitted any mortal to enter the forest for above a twelvemonth. Behold, here is a little dog belonging to the Empress, which will rouse the stag, and will chase him towards thee, and the stag will attack thee." Then the little dog went as a guide to Peredur, and roused the stag, and brought him towards the place where Peredur was. And the stag attacked Peredur, and he let him pass by him, and as he did so, he smote off his head with his sword. And while he was looking at the head of the stag, he saw a lady on horseback coming towards him. And she took the little dog in the lappet of her cap, and the head and the body of the stag lay before her. And around the stag's neck was a golden collar. "Ha! chieftain," said she, "uncourtiously hast thou acted in slaying the fairest jewel that was in my dominions." "I was entreated so to do; and is there any way by which I can obtain thy friendship?" "There is," she replied. "Go thou forward unto yonder mountain, and there thou wilt find a grove; and in the grove there is a cromlech; do thou there challenge a man three times to fight, and thou shalt have my friendship."

So Peredur proceeded onward, and came to the side of the grove, and challenged any man to fight. And a black man arose from beneath the cromlech, mounted upon a bony horse, and both he and his horse were clad in huge rusty armour. And they fought. And as often as Peredur cast the black man to the earth, he would jump again into his saddle. And Peredur dismounted, and drew his sword; and thereupon the black man disappeared with Peredur's horse and his own, so that he could not gain sight of him a second time. And Peredur went along the mountain, and on the other side of the mountain he beheld a castle in the valley, wherein was a river. And he went to the castle; and as he entered it, he saw a hall, and the door of the hall was open, and he went in. And there he saw a lame grey-headed man sitting on one side of the hall, with Gwalchmai beside him. And

Peredur beheld his horse, which the black man had taken, in the same stall with that of Gwalchmai. And they were glad concerning Peredur. And he went and seated himself on the other side of the hoary-headed man. Then, behold a yellow-haired youth came, and bent upon the knee before Peredur, and besought his friendship. "Lord," said the youth, "it was I that came in the form of the black maiden to Arthur's Court, and when thou didst throw down the chessboard, and when thou didst slay the black man of Ysbidinongyl, and when thou didst slay the stag, and when thou didst go to fight the black man of the cromlech. And I came with the bloody head in the salver, and with the lance that streamed with blood from the point to the hand, all along the shaft; and the head was thy cousin's, and he was killed by the sorceresses of Gloucester, who also lamed thine uncle; and I am thy cousin. And there is a prediction that thou art to avenge these things." Then Peredur and Gwalchmai took counsel, and sent to Arthur and his household, to beseech them to come against the sorceresses. And they began to fight with them; and one of the sorceresses slew one of Arthur's men before Peredur's face, and Peredur bade her forbear. And the sorceress slew a man before Peredur's face a second time, and a second time he forbade her. And the third time the sorceress slew a man before the face of Peredur; and then Peredur drew his sword, and smote the sorceress on the helmet; and all her head-armour was split in two parts. And she set up a cry, and desired the other sorceresses to flee, and told them that this was Peredur, the man who had learnt Chivalry with them, and by whom they were destined to be slain. Then Arthur and his household fell upon the sorceresses, and slew the sorceresses of Gloucester every one. And thus is it related concerning the Castle of Wonders.

GERAINT THE SON OF ERBIN

Arthur was accustomed to hold his Court at Caerlleon upon Usk. And there he held it seven Easters and five Christmases. And once upon a time he held his Court there at Whitsuntide. For Caerlleon was the place most easy of access in his dominions, both by sea and by land. And there were assembled nine crowned kings, who were his tributaries, and likewise earls and barons. For they were his invited guests at all the high festivals, unless they were prevented by any great hindrance. And when he was at Caerlleon, holding his Court, thirteen churches were set apart for mass. And thus were they appointed: one church for Arthur, and his kings, and his guests; and the second for Gwenhwyvar and her ladies; and the third for the Steward of the Household and the suitors; and the fourth for the Franks and the other officers; and the other nine churches were for the nine Masters of the Household and chiefly for Gwalchmai; for he, from the eminence of his warlike fame, and from the nobleness of his birth, was the most exalted of the nine. And there was no other arrangement respecting the churches than that which we have mentioned above.

Glewlywd Gavaelwawr was the chief porter; but he did not himself perform the office, except at one of the three high festivals, for he had seven men to serve him, and they divided the year amongst them. They were Gynn, and Pen Pighon, and Llaes Cymyn, and Gogyfwlch, and Gwrddnei with cat's eyes, who could see as well by night as by day, and Drem the son of Dremhitid, and Clust the son of Clustveinyd; and these were Arthur's guards. And on Whit-Tuesday, as the King sat at the banquet, lo! there entered a tall, fair-headed youth, clad in a coat and a surcoat of diapered satin, and a golden-hilted sword about his neck, and low shoes of leather upon his feet. And he came, and stood before Arthur. "Hail to thee, Lord!" said he. "Heaven prosper thee," he answered, "and be thou welcome. Dost thou bring any new tidings?" "I do, Lord," he said. "I know thee not," said Arthur. "It is a marvel to me that thou dost not know me. I am one of thy foresters, Lord, in the Forest of Dean, and my name is Madawc, the son of Twrgadarn." "Tell me thine errand," said Arthur. "I will do so, Lord," said he. "In the Forest I saw a stag, the like of which beheld I never yet." "What is there about him," asked Arthur, "that thou never yet didst see his like?" "He is of pure white, Lord, and he does not herd with any other animal through stateliness and pride, so royal is his bearing. And I come to seek thy counsel, Lord, and to know thy will

concerning him." "It seems best to me," said Arthur, "to go and hunt him to-morrow at break of day; and to cause general notice thereof to be given to-night in all quarters of the Court." And Ar-ryfuerys was Arthur's chief huntsman, and Arelivri was his chief page. And all received notice; and thus it was arranged. And they sent the youth before them. Then Gwenhwyvar said to Arthur, "Wilt thou permit me, Lord," said she, "to go to-morrow to see and hear the hunt of the stag of which the young man spoke?" "I will gladly," said Arthur. "Then will I go," said she. And Gwalchmai said to Arthur, "Lord, if it seem well to thee, permit that into whose hunt soever the stag shall come, that one, be he a knight, or one on foot, may cut off his head, and give it to whom he pleases, whether to his own lady-love, or to the lady of his friend." "I grant it gladly," said Arthur, "and let the Steward of the Household be chastised, if all are not ready to-morrow for the chase."

And they passed the night with songs, and diversions, and discourse, and ample entertainment. And when it was time for them all to go to sleep, they went. And when the next day came, they arose; and Arthur called the attendants, who guarded his couch. And these were four pages, whose names were Cadyrnerth the son of Porthawr Gandwy, and Ambreu the son of Bedwor, and Amhar the son of Arthur, and Goreu the son of Custennin. And these men came to Arthur and saluted him, and arrayed him in his garments. And Arthur wondered that Gwenhwyvar did not awake, and did not move in her bed; and the attendants wished to awaken her. "Disturb her not," said Arthur, "for she had rather sleep than go to see the hunting."

Then Arthur went forth, and he heard two horns sounding, one from near the lodging of the chief huntsman, and the other from near that of the chief page. And the whole assembly of the multitudes came to Arthur, and they took the road to the Forest.

And after Arthur had gone forth from the palace, Gwenhwyvar awoke, and called to her maidens, and apparelled herself. "Maidens," said she, "I had leave last night to go and see the hunt. Go one of you to the stable, and order hither a horse such as a woman may ride." And one of them went, and she found but two horses in the stable, and Gwenhwyvar and one of her maidens mounted them, and went through the Usk, and followed the track of the men and the horses. And as they rode thus, they heard a loud and rushing sound; and they looked behind them, and beheld a knight upon a hunter foal of mighty size; and the rider was a fair-haired youth, bare-legged, and of princely mien, and a golden-hilted sword was at his side, and a robe and a surcoat of satin were upon him, and two low shoes of leather upon his feet; and around him was a scarf of blue purple, at each corner of which was a golden apple. And his horse stepped stately, and swift, and proud; and he overtook Gwenhwyvar, and saluted her. "Heaven prosper thee, Geraint," said she, "I knew thee when first I saw thee just now. And the welcome of Heaven be unto thee. And why didst thou not go with thy lord to hunt?" "Because I knew not when he went," said he. "I marvel, too," said she, "how he could go unknown to me." "Indeed, lady," said he. "I was asleep, and knew not when he went; but thou, O young man, art the most agreeable companion I could have in the whole kingdom; and it may be, that I shall be more amused with the hunting than they; for we shall hear the horns when they sound, and we shall hear the dogs when they are let loose, and begin to cry." So they went to the edge of the Forest, and there they stood. "From this place," said she, "we shall hear when the dogs are let loose." And thereupon, they heard a loud noise, and they looked towards the spot whence it came, and they beheld a dwarf riding upon a horse, stately, and foaming, and prancing, and strong, and spirited. And in the hand of the dwarf was a whip. And near the dwarf they saw a lady upon a beautiful white horse, of steady and stately pace; and she was clothed in a garment of gold brocade. And near her was a knight upon a warhorse of large size, with heavy and bright armour both upon himself and upon his horse. And truly they never before saw a knight, or a horse, or armour, of such remarkable size. And they were all near to each other.

"Geraint," said Gwenhwyvar, "knowest thou the name of that tall knight yonder?" "I know him not," said he, "and the strange armour that he wears prevents my either seeing his face or his features." "Go, maiden," said Gwenhwyvar, "and ask the dwarf

who that knight is." Then the maiden went up to the dwarf; and the dwarf waited for the maiden, when he saw her coming towards him. And the maiden inquired of the dwarf who the knight was. "I will not tell thee," he answered. "Since thou art so churlish as not to tell me," said she, "I will ask him himself." "Thou shalt not ask him, by my faith," said he. "Wherefore?" said she. "Because thou art not of honour sufficient to befit thee to speak to my Lord." Then the maiden turned her horse's head towards the knight, upon which the dwarf struck her with the whip that was in his hand across the face and the eyes, until the blood flowed forth. And the maiden, through the hurt she received from the blow, returned to Gwenhwyvar, complaining of the pain. "Very rudely has the dwarf treated thee," said Geraint. "I will go myself to know who the knight is." "Go," said Gwenhwyvar. And Geraint went up to the dwarf. "Who is yonder knight?" said Geraint. "I will not tell thee," said the dwarf. "Then will I ask him himself," said he. "That wilt thou not, by my faith," said the dwarf, "thou art not honourable enough to speak with my Lord." Said Geraint, "I have spoken with men of equal rank with him." And he turned his horse's head towards the knight; but the dwarf overtook him, and struck him as he had done the maiden, so that the blood coloured the scarf that Geraint wore. Then Geraint put his hand upon the hilt of his sword, but he took counsel with himself, and considered that it would be no vengeance for him to slay the dwarf, and to be attacked unarmed by the armed knight, so he returned to where Gwenhwyvar was.

"Thou hast acted wisely and discreetly," said she. "Lady," said he, "I will follow him yet, with thy permission; and at last he will come to some inhabited place, where I may have arms either as a loan or for a pledge, so that I may encounter the knight." "Go," said she, "and do not attack him until thou hast good arms, and I shall be very anxious concerning thee, until I hear tidings of thee." "If I am alive," said he, "thou shalt hear tidings of me by to-morrow afternoon;" and with that he departed.

And the road they took was below the palace of Caerlleon, and across the ford of the Usk; and they went along a fair, and even, and lofty ridge of ground, until they came to a town, and at the extremity of the town they saw a Fortress and a Castle. And they came to the extremity of the town. And as the knight passed through it, all the people arose, and saluted him, and bade him welcome. And when Geraint came into the town, he looked at every house, to see if he knew any of those whom he saw. But he knew none, and none knew him to do him the kindness to let him have arms either as a loan or for a pledge. And every house he saw was full of men, and arms, and horses. And they were polishing shields, and burnishing swords, and washing armour, and shoeing horses. And the knight, and the lady, and the dwarf rode up to the Castle that was in the town, and every one was glad in the Castle. And from the battlements and the gates they risked their necks, through their eagerness to greet them, and to show their joy.

Geraint stood there to see whether the knight would remain in the Castle; and when he was certain that he would do so, he looked around him; and at a little distance from the town he saw an old palace in ruins, wherein was a hall that was falling to decay. And as he knew not any one in the town, he went towards the old palace; and when he came near to the palace, he saw but one chamber, and a bridge of marble-stone leading to it. And upon the bridge he saw sitting a hoary-headed man, upon whom were tattered garments. And Geraint gazed steadfastly upon him for a long time. Then the hoary-headed man spoke to him. "Young man," he said, "wherefore art thou thoughtful?" "I am thoughtful," said he, "because I know not where to go to-night." "Wilt thou come forward this way, chieftain?" said he, "and thou shalt have of the best that can be procured for thee." So Geraint went forward. And the hoary-headed man preceded him into the hall. And in the hall he dismounted, and he left there his horse. Then he went on to the upper chamber with the hoary-headed man. And in the chamber he beheld an old decrepit woman, sitting on a cushion, with old, tattered garments of satin upon her; and it seemed to him that he had never seen a woman fairer than she must have been, when in the fulness of youth. And beside her was a maiden, upon whom were a vest and

a veil, that were old, and beginning to be worn out. And truly, he never saw a maiden more full of comeliness, and grace, and beauty than she. And the hoary-headed man said to the maiden, "There is no attendant for the horse of this youth but thyself." "I will render the best service I am able," said she, "both to him and to his horse." And the maiden disarrayed the youth, and then she furnished his horse with straw and with corn. And she went to the hall as before, and then she returned to the chamber. And the hoary-headed man said to the maiden, "Go to the town," said he, "and bring hither the best that thou canst find both of food and of liquor." "I will, gladly, Lord," said she. And to the town went the maiden. And they conversed together while the maiden was at the town. And, behold! the maiden came back, and a youth with her, bearing on his back a costrel full of good purchased mead, and a quarter of a young bullock. And in the hands of the maiden was a quantity of white bread, and she had some manchet bread in her veil, and she came into the chamber. "I could not obtain better than this," said she, "nor with better should I have been trusted." "It is good enough," said Geraint. And they caused the meat to be boiled; and when their food was ready, they sat down. And it was on this wise; Geraint sat between the hoary-headed man and his wife, and the maiden served them. And they ate and drank.

And when they had finished eating, Geraint talked with the hoary-headed man, and he asked him in the first place, to whom belonged the palace that he was in. "Truly," said he, "it was I that built it, and to me also belonged the city and the castle which thou sawest." "Alas!" said Geraint, "how is it that thou hast lost them now?" "I lost a great Earldom as well as these," said he; "and this is how I lost them. I had a nephew, the son of my brother, and I took his possessions to myself; and when he came to his strength, he demanded of me his property, but I withheld it from him. So he made war upon me, and wrested from me all that I possessed." "Good Sir," said Geraint, "wilt thou tell me wherefore came the knight, and the lady, and the dwarf, just now into the town, and what is the preparation which I saw, and the putting of arms in order?" "I will do so," said he. "The preparations are for the game that is to be held to-morrow by the young Earl, which will be on this wise. In the midst of a meadow which is here, two forks will be set up, and upon the two forks a silver rod, and upon the silver rod a Sparrow-Hawk, and for the Sparrow-Hawk there will be a tournament. And to the tournament will go all the array thou didst see in the city, of men, and of horses, and of arms. And with each man will go the lady he loves best; and no man can joust for the Sparrow-Hawk, except the lady he loves best be with him. And the knight that thou sawest has gained the Sparrow-Hawk these two years; and if he gains it the third year, they will, from that time, send it every year to him, and he himself will come here no more. And he will be called the Knight of the Sparrow-Hawk from that time forth." "Sir," said Geraint, "what is thy counsel to me concerning this knight, on account of the insult which I received from the dwarf, and that which was received by the maiden of Gwenhwyvar, the wife of Arthur?" And Geraint told the hoary-headed man what the insult was that he had received. "It is not easy to counsel thee, inasmuch as thou hast neither dame nor maiden belonging to thee, for whom thou canst joust. Yet, I have arms here, which thou couldest have; and there is my horse also, if he seem to thee better than thine own." "Ah! Sir," said he, "Heaven reward thee. But my own horse, to which I am accustomed, together with thy arms, will suffice me. And if, when the appointed time shall come to-morrow, thou wilt permit me, Sir, to challenge for yonder maiden that is thy daughter, I will engage, if I escape from the tournament, to love the maiden as long as I live; and if I do not escape, she will remain unsullied as before." "Gladly will I permit thee," said the hoary-headed man, "and since thou dost thus resolve, it is necessary that thy horse and arms should be ready to-morrow at break of day. For then the Knight of the Sparrow-Hawk will make proclamation, and ask the lady he loves best to take the Sparrow-Hawk. 'For,' will he say to her, 'thou art the fairest of women, and thou didst possess it last year, and the year previous; and if any deny it thee to-day, by force will I defend it for thee.' And therefore," said the hoary-headed man, "it is needful for thee to be there at daybreak; and we three

will be with thee.” And thus was it settled.

And at night, lo! they went to sleep; and before the dawn they arose, and arrayed themselves; and by the time that it was day, they were all four in the meadow. And there was the Knight of the Sparrow-Hawk making the proclamation, and asking his lady-love to fetch the Sparrow-Hawk. “Fetch it not,” said Geraint, “for there is here a maiden, who is fairer, and more noble, and more comely, and who has a better claim to it than thou.” “If thou maintainest the Sparrow-Hawk to be due to her, come forward, and do battle with me.” And Geraint went forward to the top of the meadow, having upon himself and upon his horse armour which was heavy, and rusty, and worthless, and of uncouth shape. Then they encountered each other, and they broke a set of lances, and they broke a second set, and a third. And thus they did at every onset, and they broke as many lances as were brought to them. And when the Earl and his company saw the Knight of the Sparrow-Hawk gaining the mastery, there was shouting, and joy, and mirth amongst them. And the hoary-headed man, and his wife, and his daughter were sorrowful. And the hoary-headed man served Geraint lances as often as he broke them, and the dwarf served the Knight of the Sparrow-Hawk. Then the hoary-headed man came to Geraint. “Oh! chieftain,” said he, “since no other will hold with thee, behold, here is the lance which was in my hand on the day when I received the honour of knighthood; and from that time to this I never broke it. And it has an excellent point.” Then Geraint took the lance, thanking the hoary-headed man. And thereupon the dwarf also brought a lance to his lord. “Behold, here is a lance for thee, not less good than his,” said the dwarf. “And bethink thee, that no knight ever withstood thee before so long as this one has done.” “I declare to Heaven,” said Geraint, “that unless death takes me quickly hence, he shall fare never the better for thy service.” And Geraint pricked his horse towards him from afar, and warning him, he rushed upon him, and gave him a blow so severe, and furious, and fierce, upon the face of his shield, that he cleft it in two, and broke his armour, and burst his girths, so that both he and his saddle were borne to the ground over the horse’s crupper. And Geraint dismounted quickly. And he was wroth, and he drew his sword, and rushed fiercely upon him. Then the knight also arose, and drew his sword against Geraint. And they fought on foot with their swords until their arms struck sparks of fire like stars from one another; and thus they continued fighting until the blood and sweat obscured the light from their eyes. And when Geraint prevailed, the hoary-headed man, and his wife, and his daughter were glad; and when the knight prevailed, it rejoiced the Earl and his party. Then the hoary-headed man saw Geraint receive a severe stroke, and he went up to him quickly, and said to him, “Oh, chieftain, remember the treatment which thou hadst from the dwarf; and wilt thou not seek vengeance for the insult to thyself, and for the insult to Gwenhwyvar the wife of Arthur!” And Geraint was roused by what he said to him, and he called to him all his strength, and lifted up his sword, and struck the knight upon the crown of his head, so that he broke all his head-armour, and cut through all the flesh and the skin, even to the skull, until he wounded the bone.

Then the knight fell upon his knees, and cast his sword from his hand, and besought mercy of Geraint. “Of a truth,” said he, “I relinquish my overdaring and my pride in craving thy mercy; and unless I have time to commit myself to Heaven for my sins, and to talk with a priest, thy mercy will avail me little.” “I will grant thee grace upon this condition,” said Geraint, “that thou wilt go to Gwenhwyvar the wife of Arthur, to do her satisfaction for the insult which her maiden received from thy dwarf. As to myself, for the insult which I received from thee and thy dwarf, I am content with that which I have done unto thee. Dismount not from the time thou goest hence until thou comest into the presence of Gwenhwyvar, to make her what atonement shall be adjudged at the Court of Arthur.” “This will I do gladly. And who art thou?” said he. “I am Geraint the son of Erbin. And declare thou also who thou art.” “I am Edeyrn the son of Nudd.” Then he threw himself upon his horse, and went forward to Arthur’s Court, and the lady he loved best went before him and the dwarf, with much lamentation. And thus far this story up to that time.

Then came the little Earl and his hosts to Geraint, and saluted

him, and bade him to his castle. “I may not go,” said Geraint, “but where I was last night, there will I be to-night also.” “Since thou wilt none of my inviting, thou shalt have abundance of all that I can command for thee, in the place thou wast last night. And I will order ointment for thee, to recover thee from thy fatigues, and from the weariness that is upon thee.” “Heaven reward thee,” said Geraint, “and I will go to my lodging.” And thus went Geraint, and Earl Ynywl, and his wife, and his daughter. And when they reached the chamber, the household servants and attendants of the young Earl had arrived at the Court, and they arranged all the houses, dressing them with straw and with fire; and in a short time the ointment was ready, and Geraint came there, and they washed his head. Then came the young Earl, with forty honourable knights from among his attendants, and those who were bidden to the tournament. And Geraint came from the anointing. And the Earl asked him to go to the hall to eat. “Where is the Earl Ynywl,” said Geraint, “and his wife, and his daughter?” “They are in the chamber yonder,” said the Earl’s chamberlain, “arraying themselves in garments which the Earl has caused to be brought for them.” “Let not the damsel array herself,” said he, “except in her vest and her veil, until she come to the Court of Arthur, to be clad by Gwenhwyvar in such garments as she may choose.” So the maiden did not array herself.

Then they all entered the hall, and they washed, and went, and sat down to meat. And thus were they seated. On one side of Geraint sat the young Earl, and Earl Ynywl beyond him; and on the other side of Geraint were the maiden and her mother. And after these all sat according to their precedence in honour. And they ate. And they were served abundantly, and they received a profusion of divers kind of gifts. Then they conversed together. And the young Earl invited Geraint to visit him next day. “I will not, by Heaven,” said Geraint. “To the Court of Arthur will I go with this maiden to-morrow. And it is enough for me, as long as Earl Ynywl is in poverty and trouble; and I go chiefly to seek to add to his maintenance.” “Ah, chieftain,” said the young Earl, “it is not by my fault that Earl Ynywl is without his possessions.” “By my faith,” said Geraint, “he shall not remain without them, unless death quickly takes me hence.” “Oh, chieftain,” said he, “with regard to the disagreement between me and Ynywl, I will gladly abide by thy counsel, and agree to what thou mayest judge right between us.” “I but ask thee,” said Geraint, “to restore to him what is his, and what he should have received from the time he lost his possessions, even until this day.” “That I will do gladly, for thee,” answered he. “Then,” said Geraint, “whosoever is here who owes homage to Ynywl, let him come forward, and perform it on the spot.” And all the men did so. And by that treaty they abided. And his castle, and his town, and all his possessions were restored to Ynywl. And he received back all that he had lost, even to the smallest jewel.

Then spoke Earl Ynywl to Geraint. “Chieftain,” said he, “behold the maiden for whom thou didst challenge at the tournament, I bestow her upon thee.” “She shall go with me,” said Geraint, “to the Court of Arthur; and Arthur and Gwenhwyvar they shall dispose of her as they will.” And the next day they proceeded to Arthur’s Court. So far concerning Geraint.

Now, this is how Arthur hunted the stag. The men and the dogs were divided into hunting parties, and the dogs were let loose upon the stag. And the last dog that was let loose was the favourite dog of Arthur. Cavall was his name. And he left all the other dogs behind him, and turned the stag. And at the second turn, the stag came towards the hunting party of Arthur. And Arthur set upon him. And before he could be slain by any other, Arthur cut off his head. Then they sounded the death horn for slaying, and they all gathered round.

Then came Kadyrieith to Arthur, and spoke to him. “Lord,” said he, “behold, yonder is Gwenhwyvar, and none with her save only one maiden.” “Command Gildas the son of Caw, and all the scholars of the Court,” said Arthur, “to attend Gwenhwyvar to the palace.” And they did so.

Then they all set forth, holding converse together concerning the head of the stag, to whom it should be given. One wished that it should be given to the lady best beloved by him, and another to the lady whom he loved best. And all they of the house-

hold, and the knights, disputed sharply concerning the head. And with that they came to the palace. And when Arthur and Gwenhwyvar heard them disputing about the head of the stag, Gwenhwyvar said to Arthur, "My lord, this is my counsel concerning the stag's head; let it not be given away until Geraint the son of Erbin shall return from the errand he is upon." And Gwenhwyvar told Arthur what that errand was. "Right gladly shall it be so," said Arthur. And thus it was settled. And the next day Gwenhwyvar caused a watch to be set upon the ramparts for Geraint's coming. And after mid-day they beheld an unshapely little man upon a horse, and after him, as they supposed, a dame or a damsel, also on horseback, and after her a knight of large stature, bowed down, and hanging his head low and sorrowfully, and clad in broken and worthless armour.

And before they came near to the gate, one of the watch went to Gwenhwyvar, and told her what kind of people they saw, and what aspect they bore. "I know not who they are," said he. "But I know," said Gwenhwyvar; "this is the knight whom Geraint pursued, and methinks that he comes not here by his own free will. But Geraint has overtaken him, and avenged the insult to the maiden to the uttermost." And thereupon, behold a porter came to the spot where Gwenhwyvar was. "Lady," said he, "at the gate there is a knight, and I saw never a man of so pitiful an aspect to look upon as he. Miserable and broken is the armour that he wears, and the hue of blood is more conspicuous upon it than its own colour." "Knowest thou his name?" said she. "I do," said he; "he tells me that he is Edeyrn the son of Nudd." Then she replied, "I know him not."

So Gwenhwyvar went to the gate to meet him, and he entered. And Gwenhwyvar was sorry when she saw the condition he was in, even though he was accompanied by the churlish dwarf. Then Edeyrn saluted Gwenhwyvar. "Heaven protect thee," said she. "Lady," said he, "Geraint the son of Erbin, thy best and most valiant servant, greets thee." "Did he meet thee?" she asked. "Yes," said he, "and it was not to my advantage; and that was not his fault, but mine, Lady. And Geraint greets thee well; and in greeting thee he compelled me to come hither to do thy pleasure for the insult which thy maiden received from the dwarf. He forgives the insult to himself, in consideration of his having put me in peril of my life. And he imposed on me a condition, manly, and honourable, and warrior-like, which was to do thee justice, Lady." "Now, where did he overtake thee?" "At the place where we were jousting, and contending for the Sparrow-Hawk, in the town which is now called Cardiff. And there were none with him save three persons, of a mean and tattered condition. And these were an aged, hoary-headed man, and a woman advanced in years, and a fair young maiden, clad in worn-out garments. And it was for the avouchment of the love of that maiden that Geraint jousted for the Sparrow-Hawk at the tournament, for he said that that maiden was better entitled to the Sparrow-Hawk than this maiden who was with me. And thereupon we encountered each other, and he left me, Lady, as thou seest." "Sir," said she, "when thinkest thou that Geraint will be here?" "To-morrow, Lady, I think he will be here with the maiden."

Then Arthur came to him, and he saluted Arthur; and Arthur gazed a long time upon him, and was amazed to see him thus. And thinking that he knew him, he inquired of him, "Art thou Edeyrn the son of Nudd?" "I am, Lord," said he, "and I have met with much trouble, and received wounds unsupportable." Then he told Arthur all his adventure. "Well," said Arthur, "from what I hear, it behoves Gwenhwyvar to be merciful towards thee." "The mercy which thou desirest, Lord," said she, "will I grant to him, since it is as insulting to thee that an insult should be offered to me as to thyself." "Thus will it be best to do," said Arthur; "let this man have medical care until it be known whether he may live. And if he live, he shall do such satisfaction as shall be judged best by the men of the Court; and take thou sureties to that effect. And if he die, too much will be the death of such a youth as Edeyrn for an insult to a maiden." "This pleases me," said Gwenhwyvar. And Arthur became surety for Edeyrn, and Caradawc the son of Llŷr, Gwallawg the son of Llenawg, and Owain the son of Nudd, and Gwalchmai, and many others with them. And Arthur caused Morgan Tud to be called to him. He was the chief physician. "Take with thee

Edeyrn the son of Nudd, and cause a chamber to be prepared for him, and let him have the aid of medicine as thou wouldst do unto myself, if I were wounded, and let none into his chamber to molest him, but thyself and thy disciples, to administer to him remedies." "I will do so gladly, Lord," said Morgan Tud. Then said the steward of the household, "Whither is it right, Lord, to order the maiden?" "To Gwenhwyvar and her handmaidens," said he. And the steward of the household so ordered her. Thus far concerning them.

The next day came Geraint towards the Court; and there was a watch set on the ramparts by Gwenhwyvar, lest he should arrive unawares. And one of the watch came to the place where Gwenhwyvar was. "Lady," said he, "methinks that I see Geraint, and the maiden with him. He is on horseback, but he has his walking gear upon him, and the maiden appears to be in white, seeming to be clad in a garment of linen." "Assemble all the women," said Gwenhwyvar, "and come to meet Geraint, to welcome him, and wish him joy." And Gwenhwyvar went to meet Geraint and the maiden. And when Geraint came to the place where Gwenhwyvar was, he saluted her. "Heaven prosper thee," said she, "and welcome to thee. And thy career has been successful, and fortunate, and resistless, and glorious. And Heaven reward thee, that thou hast so proudly caused me to have retribution." "Lady," said he, "I earnestly desired to obtain thee satisfaction according to thy will; and, behold, here is the maiden through whom thou hadst thy revenge." "Verily," said Gwenhwyvar, "the welcome of Heaven be unto her; and it is fitting that we should receive her joyfully." Then they went in, and dismounted. And Geraint came to where Arthur was, and saluted him. "Heaven protect thee," said Arthur, "and the welcome of Heaven be unto thee. And since Edeyrn the son of Nudd has received his overthrow and wounds from thy hands, thou hast had a prosperous career." "Not upon me be the blame," said Geraint, "it was through the arrogance of Edeyrn the son of Nudd himself that we were not friends. I would not quit him until I knew who he was, and until the one had vanquished the other." "Now," said Arthur, "where is the maiden for whom I heard thou didst give challenge?" "She is gone with Gwenhwyvar to her chamber."

Then went Arthur to see the maiden. And Arthur, and all his companions, and his whole Court, were glad concerning the maiden. And certain were they all, that had her array been suitable to her beauty, they had never seen a maid fairer than she. And Arthur gave away the maiden to Geraint. And the usual bond made between two persons was made between Geraint and the maiden, and the choicest of all Gwenhwyvar's apparel was given to the maiden; and thus arrayed, she appeared comely and graceful to all who beheld her. And that day and that night were spent in abundance of minstrelsy, and ample gifts of liquor, and a multitude of games. And when it was time for them to go to sleep, they went. And in the chamber where the couch of Arthur and Gwenhwyvar was, the couch of Geraint and Enid was prepared. And from that time she became his bride. And the next day Arthur satisfied all the claimants upon Geraint with bountiful gifts. And the maiden took up her abode in the palace; and she had many companions, both men and women, and there was no maiden more esteemed than she in the Island of Britain.

Then spake Gwenhwyvar. "Rightly did I judge," said she, "concerning the head of the stag, that it should not be given to any until Geraint's return; and, behold, here is a fit occasion for bestowing it. Let it be given to Enid the daughter of Ynywl, the most illustrious maiden. And I do not believe that any will begrudge it her, for between her and every one here there exists nothing but love and friendship." Much applauded was this by them all, and by Arthur also. And the head of the stag was given to Enid. And thereupon her fame increased, and her friends thenceforward became more in number than before. And Geraint from that time forth loved the stag, and the tournament, and hard encounters; and he came victorious from them all. And a year, and a second, and a third, he proceeded thus, until his fame had flown over the face of the kingdom.

And once upon a time Arthur was holding his Court at Caerleon upon Usk, at Whitsuntide. And, behold, there came to him ambassadors, wise and prudent, full of knowledge, and eloquent

of speech, and they saluted Arthur. "Heaven prosper you," said Arthur, "and the welcome of Heaven be unto you. And whence do you come?" "We come, Lord," said they, "from Cornwall; and we are ambassadors from Erbin the son of Custennin, thy uncle, and our mission is unto thee. And he greets thee well, as an uncle should greet his nephew, and as a vassal should greet his lord. And he represents unto thee that he waxes heavy and feeble, and is advancing in years. And the neighbouring chiefs, knowing this, grow insolent towards him, and covet his land and possessions. And he earnestly beseeches thee, Lord, to permit Geraint his son to return to him, to protect his possessions, and to become acquainted with his boundaries. And unto him he represents that it were better for him to spend the flower of his youth and the prime of his age in preserving his own boundaries, than in tournaments, which are productive of no profit, although he obtains glory in them."

"Well," said Arthur, "go, and divest yourselves of your accoutrements, and take food, and refresh yourselves after your fatigues; and before you go forth hence you shall have an answer." And they went to eat. And Arthur considered that it would go hard with him to let Geraint depart from him and from his Court; neither did he think it fair that his cousin should be restrained from going to protect his dominions and his boundaries, seeing that his father was unable to do so. No less was the grief and regret of Gwenhwyvar, and all her women, and all her damsels, through fear that the maiden would leave them. And that day and that night were spent in abundance of feasting. And Arthur showed Geraint the cause of the mission, and of the coming of the ambassadors to him out of Cornwall. "Truly," said Geraint, "be it to my advantage or disadvantage, Lord, I will do according to thy will concerning this embassy." "Behold," said Arthur, "though it grieves me to part with thee, it is my counsel that thou go to dwell in thine own dominions, and to defend thy boundaries, and to take with thee to accompany thee as many as thou wilt of those thou lovest best among my faithful ones, and among thy friends, and among thy companions in arms." "Heaven reward thee; and this will I do," said Geraint. "What discourse," said Gwenhwyvar, "do I hear between you? Is it of those who are to conduct Geraint to his country?" "It is," said Arthur. "Then it is needful for me to consider," said she, "concerning companions and a provision for the lady that is with me?" "Thou wilt do well," said Arthur.

And that night they went to sleep. And the next day the ambassadors were permitted to depart, and they were told that Geraint should follow them. And on the third day Geraint set forth, and many went with him. Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, and Riogonedd the son of the king of Ireland, and Ondyaw the son of the duke of Burgundy, Gwilim the son of the ruler of the Franks, Howel the son of Emyr of Brittany, Elivry, and Nawkyrd, Gwynn the son of Tringad, Goreu the son of Custennin, Gweir Gwrhyd Vawr, Garannaw the son of Golithmer, Peredur the son of Evrawc, Gwynnlogell, Gwyr a judge in the Court of Arthur, Dyvyr the son of Alun of Dyved, Gwrei Gwalstawd Ieithoedd, Bedwyr the son of Bedrawd, Hadwry the son of Gwryon, Kai the son of Kynry, Odyar the Frank, the Steward of Arthur's Court, and Edeyrn the son of Nudd. Said Geraint, "I think that I shall have enough of knight-hood with me." "Yes," said Arthur, "but it will not be fitting for thee to take Edeyrn with thee, although he is well, until peace shall be made between him and Gwenhwyvar." "Gwenhwyvar can permit him to go with me, if he give sureties." "If she please, she can let him go without sureties, for enough of pain and affliction has he suffered for the insult which the maiden received from the dwarf." "Truly," said Gwenhwyvar, "since it seems well to thee and to Geraint, I will do this gladly, Lord." Then she permitted Edeyrn freely to depart. And many there were who accompanied Geraint, and they set forth; and never was there seen a fairer host journeying towards the Severn. And on the other side of the Severn were the nobles of Erbin the son of Custennin, and his foster-father at their head, to welcome Geraint with gladness; and many of the women of the Court, with his mother, came to receive Enid the daughter of Ynywl, his wife. And there was great rejoicing and gladness throughout the whole Court, and throughout all the country, concerning Geraint, because of the greatness

of their love towards him, and of the greatness of the fame which he had gained since he went from amongst them, and because he was come to take possession of his dominions and to preserve his boundaries. And they came to the Court. And in the Court they had ample entertainment, and a multitude of gifts and abundance of liquor, and a sufficiency of service, and a variety of minstrelsy and of games. And to do honour to Geraint, all the chief men of the country were invited that night to visit him. And they passed that day and that night in the utmost enjoyment. And at dawn next day Erbin arose, and summoned to him Geraint, and the noble persons who had borne him company. And he said to Geraint, "I am a feeble and aged man, and whilst I was able to maintain the dominion for thee and for myself, I did so. But thou art young, and in the flower of thy vigour and of thy youth; henceforth do thou preserve thy possessions." "Truly," said Geraint, "with my consent thou shalt not give the power over thy dominions at this time into my hands, and thou shalt not take me from Arthur's Court." "Into thy hands will I give them," said Erbin, "and this day also shalt thou receive the homage of thy subjects."

Then said Gwalchmai, "It were better for thee to satisfy those who have boons to ask, to-day, and to-morrow thou canst receive the homage of thy dominions." So all that had boons to ask were summoned into one place. And Kadyrieith came to them, to know what were their requests. And every one asked that which he desired. And the followers of Arthur began to make gifts, and immediately the men of Cornwall came, and gave also. And they were not long in giving, so eager was every one to bestow gifts. And of those who came to ask gifts, none departed unsatisfied. And that day and that night were spent in the utmost enjoyment.

And the next day, at dawn, Erbin desired Geraint to send messengers to the men, to ask them whether it was displeasing to them that he should come to receive their homage, and whether they had anything to object to him. Then Geraint sent ambassadors to the men of Cornwall, to ask them this. And they all said that it would be the fulness of joy and honour to them for Geraint to come and receive their homage. So he received the homage of such as were there. And they remained with him till the third night. And the day after the followers of Arthur intended to go away. "It is too soon for you to go away yet," said he, "stay with me until I have finished receiving the homage of my chief men, who have agreed to come to me." And they remained with him until he had done so. Then they set forth towards the Court of Arthur; and Geraint went to bear them company, and Enid also, as far as Diganhwy: there they parted. Then Ondyaw the son of the duke of Burgundy said to Geraint, "Go first of all and visit the uppermost parts of thy dominions, and see well to the boundaries of thy territories; and if thou hast any trouble respecting them, send unto thy companions." "Heaven reward thee," said Geraint, "and this will I do." And Geraint journeyed to the uttermost part of his dominions. And experienced guides, and the chief men of his country, went with him. And the furthestmost point that they showed him he kept possession of.

And, as he had been used to do when he was at Arthur's Court, he frequented tournaments. And he became acquainted with valiant and mighty men, until he had gained as much fame there as he had formerly done elsewhere. And he enriched his Court, and his companions, and his nobles, with the best horses and the best arms, and with the best and most valuable jewels, and he ceased not until his fame had flown over the face of the whole kingdom. And when he knew that it was thus, he began to love ease and pleasure, for there was no one who was worth his opposing. And he loved his wife, and liked to continue in the palace, with minstrelsy and diversions. And for a long time he abode at home. And after that he began to shut himself up in the chamber of his wife, and he took no delight in anything besides, insomuch that he gave up the friendship of his nobles, together with his hunting and his amusements, and lost the hearts of all the host in his Court; and there was murmuring and scoffing concerning him among the inhabitants of the palace, on account of his relinquishing so completely their companionship for the love of his wife. And these tidings came to Erbin. And when Erbin had heard these things, he spoke unto Enid, and inquired of her whether it was she that had caused Geraint to act thus, and to forsake his

people and his hosts. "Not I, by my confession unto Heaven," said she, "there is nothing more hateful to me than this." And she knew not what she should do, for, although it was hard for her to own this to Geraint, yet was it not more easy for her to listen to what she heard, without warning Geraint concerning it. And she was very sorrowful.

And one morning in the summer time, they were upon their couch, and Geraint lay upon the edge of it. And Enid was without sleep in the apartment, which had windows of glass. And the sun shone upon the couch. And the clothes had slipped from off his arms and his breast, and he was asleep. Then she gazed upon the marvellous beauty of his appearance, and she said, "Alas, and am I the cause that these arms and this breast have lost their glory and the warlike fame which they once so richly enjoyed!" And as she said this, the tears dropped from her eyes, and they fell upon his breast. And the tears she shed, and the words she had spoken, awoke him; and another thing contributed to awaken him, and that was the idea that it was not in thinking of him that she spoke thus, but that it was because she loved some other man more than him, and that she wished for other society, and thereupon Geraint was troubled in his mind, and he called his squire; and when he came to him, "Go quickly," said he, "and prepare my horse and my arms, and make them ready. And do thou arise," said he to Enid, "and apparel thyself; and cause thy horse to be accoutred, and clothe thee in the worst riding-dress that thou hast in thy possession. And evil betide me," said he, "if thou returnest here until thou knowest whether I have lost my strength so completely as thou didst say. And if it be so, it will then be easy for thee to seek the society thou didst wish for of him of whom thou wast thinking." So she arose, and clothed herself in her meanest garments. "I know nothing, Lord," said she, "of thy meaning." "Neither wilt thou know at this time," said he.

Then Geraint went to see Erbin. "Sir," said he, "I am going upon a quest, and I am not certain when I may come back. Take heed, therefore, unto thy possessions, until my return." "I will do so," said he, "but it is strange to me that thou shouldest go so suddenly. And who will proceed with thee, since thou art not strong enough to traverse the land of Lloegyr alone?" "But one person only will go with me." "Heaven counsel thee, my son," said Erbin, "and may many attach themselves to thee in Lloegyr." Then went Geraint to the place where his horse was, and it was equipped with foreign armour, heavy and shining. And he desired Enid to mount her horse, and to ride forward, and to keep a long way before him. "And whatever thou mayest see, and whatever thou mayest hear concerning me," said he, "do thou not turn back. And unless I speak unto thee, say not thou one word either." And they set forward. And he did not choose the pleasantest and most frequented road, but that which was the wildest and most beset by thieves, and robbers, and venomous animals. And they came to a high road, which they followed till they saw a vast forest, and they went towards it, and they saw four armed horsemen come forth from the forest. When the horsemen had beheld them, one of them said to the others, "Behold, here is a good occasion for us to capture two horses and armour, and a lady likewise; for this we shall have no difficulty in doing against yonder single knight, who hangs his head so pensively and heavily." And Enid heard this discourse, and she knew not what she should do through fear of Geraint, who had told her to be silent. "The vengeance of Heaven be upon me," she said, "if I would not rather receive my death from his hand than from the hand of any other; and though he should slay me yet will I speak to him, lest I should have the misery to witness his death." So she waited for Geraint until he came near to her. "Lord," said she, "didst thou hear the words of those men concerning thee?" Then he lifted up his eyes, and looked at her angrily. "Thou hadst only," said he, "to hold thy peace as I bade thee. I wish but for silence, and not for warning. And though thou shouldest desire to see my defeat and my death by the hands of those men, yet do I feel no dread." Then the foremost of them couched his lance, and rushed upon Geraint. And he received him, and that not feebly. But he let the thrust go by him, while he struck the horseman upon the centre of his shield in such a manner that his shield was split, and his armour broken, and so that a cubit's length of the shaft of Geraint's lance passed through

his body, and sent him to the earth, the length of the lance over his horse's crupper. Then the second horseman attacked him furiously, being wroth at the death of his companion. But with one thrust Geraint overthrew him also, and killed him as he had done the other. Then the third set upon him, and he killed him in like manner. And thus also he slew the fourth. Sad and sorrowful was the maiden as she saw all this. Geraint dismounted from his horse, and took the arms of the men he had slain, and placed them upon their saddles, and tied together the reins of their horses, and he mounted his horse again. "Behold what thou must do," said he; "take the four horses, and drive them before thee, and proceed forward, as I bade thee just now. And say not one word unto me, unless I speak first unto thee. And I declare unto Heaven," said he, "if thou doest not thus, it will be to thy cost." "I will do, as far as I can, Lord," said she, "according to thy desire." Then they went forward through the forest; and when they left the forest, they came to a vast plain, in the centre of which was a group of thickly tangled copse-wood; and from out thereof they beheld three horsemen coming towards them, well equipped with armour, both they and their horses. Then the maiden looked steadfastly upon them; and when they had come near, she heard them say one to another, "Behold, here is a good arrival for us; here are coming for us four horses and four suits of armour. We shall easily obtain them spite of yonder dolorous knight, and the maiden also will fall into our power." "This is but too true," said she to herself, "for my husband is tired with his former combat. The vengeance of Heaven will be upon me, unless I warn him of this." So the maiden waited until Geraint came up to her. "Lord," said she, "dust thou not hear the discourse of yonder men concerning thee?" "What was it?" asked he. "They say to one another, that they will easily obtain all this spoil." "I declare to Heaven," he answered, "that their words are less grievous to me than that thou wilt not be silent, and abide by my counsel." "My Lord," said she, "I feared lest they should surprise thee unawares." "Hold thy peace, then," said he, "do not I desire silence?" And thereupon one of the horsemen couched his lance, and attacked Geraint. And he made a thrust at him, which he thought would be very effective; but Geraint received it carelessly, and struck it aside, and then he rushed upon him, and aimed at the centre of his person, and from the shock of man and horse, the quantity of his armour did not avail him, and the head of the lance and part of the shaft passed through him, so that he was carried to the ground an arm and a spear's length over the crupper of his horse. And both the other horsemen came forward in their turn, but their onset was not more successful than that of their companion. And the maiden stood by, looking at all this; and on the one hand she was in trouble lest Geraint should be wounded in his encounter with the men, and on the other hand she was joyful to see him victorious. Then Geraint dismounted, and bound the three suits of armour upon the three saddles, and he fastened the reins of all the horses together, so that he had seven horses with him. And he mounted his own horse, and commanded the maiden to drive forward the others. "It is no more use for me to speak to thee than to refrain, for thou wilt not attend to my advice." "I will do so, as far as I am able, Lord," said she; "but I cannot conceal from thee the fierce and threatening words which I may hear against thee, Lord, from such strange people as those that haunt this wilderness." "I declare to Heaven," said he, "that I desire nought but silence; therefore, hold thy peace." "I will, Lord, while I can." And the maiden went on with the horses before her, and she pursued her way straight onwards. And from the copse-wood already mentioned, they journeyed over a vast and dreary open plain. And at a great distance from them they beheld a wood, and they could see neither end nor boundary to the wood, except on that side that was nearest to them, and they went towards it. Then there came from out the wood five horsemen, eager, and bold, and mighty, and strong, mounted upon chargers that were powerful, and large of bone, and high-mettled, and proudly snorting, and both the men and the horses were well equipped with arms. And when they drew near to them, Enid heard them say, "Behold, here is a fine booty coming to us, which we shall obtain easily and without labour, for we shall have no trouble in taking all those horses and arms, and the lady also, from yonder single knight, so doleful and sad."

Sorely grieved was the maiden upon hearing this discourse, so that she knew not in the world what she should do. At last, however, she determined to warn Geraint; so she turned her horse's head towards him. "Lord," said she, "if thou hadst heard as I did what yonder horsemen said concerning thee, thy heaviness would be greater than it is." Angrily and bitterly did Geraint smile upon her, and he said, "Thee do I hear doing everything that I forbade thee; but it may be that thou wilt repent this yet." And immediately, behold, the men met them, and victoriously and gallantly did Geraint overcome them all five. And he placed the five suits of armour upon the five saddles, and tied together the reins of the twelve horses, and gave them in charge to Enid. "I know not," said he, "what good it is for me to order thee; but this time I charge thee in an especial manner." So the maiden went forward towards the wood, keeping in advance of Geraint, as he had desired her; and it grieved him as much as his wrath would permit, to see a maiden so illustrious as she having so much trouble with the care of the horses. Then they reached the wood, and it was both deep and vast; and in the wood night overtook them. "Ah, maiden," said he, "it is vain to attempt proceeding forward!" "Well, Lord," said she, "whatsoever thou wishest, we will do." "It will be best for us," he answered, "to turn out of the wood, and to rest, and wait for the day, in order to pursue our journey." "That will we, gladly," said she. And they did so. Having dismounted himself, he took her down from her horse. "I cannot, by any means, refrain from sleep, through weariness," said he. "Do thou, therefore, watch the horses, and sleep not." "I will, Lord," said she. Then he went to sleep in his armour, and thus passed the night, which was not long at that season. And when she saw the dawn of day appear, she looked around her, to see if he were waking, and thereupon he woke. "My Lord," she said, "I have desired to awake thee for some time." But he spake nothing to her about fatigue, as he had desired her to be silent. Then he arose, and said unto her, "Take the horses, and ride on; and keep straight on before thee as thou didst yesterday." And early in the day they left the wood, and they came to an open country, with meadows on one hand, and mowers mowing the meadows. And there was a river before them, and the horses bent down, and drank the water. And they went up out of the river by a lofty steep; and there they met a slender stripling, with a satchel about his neck, and they saw that there was something in the satchel, but they knew not what it was. And he had a small blue pitcher in his hand, and a bowl on the mouth of the pitcher. And the youth saluted Geraint. "Heaven prosper thee," said Geraint, "and whence dost thou come?" "I come," said he, "from the city that lies before thee. My Lord," he added, "will it be displeasing to thee if I ask whence thou comest also?" "By no means—through yonder wood did I come." "Thou comest not through the wood to-day." "No," he replied, "we were in the wood last night." "I warrant," said the youth, "that thy condition there last night was not the most pleasant, and that thou hadst neither meat nor drink." "No, by my faith," said he. "Wilt thou follow my counsel," said the youth, "and take thy meal from me?" "What sort of meal?" he inquired. "The breakfast which is sent for yonder mowers, nothing less than bread and meat and wine; and if thou wilt, Sir, they shall have none of it." "I will," said he, "and Heaven reward thee for it."

So Geraint alighted, and the youth took the maiden from off her horse. Then they washed, and took their repast. And the youth cut the bread in slices, and gave them drink, and served them withal. And when they had finished, the youth arose, and said to Geraint, "My Lord, with thy permission, I will now go and fetch some food for the mowers." "Go, first, to the town," said Geraint, "and take a lodging for me in the best place that thou knowest, and the most commodious one for the horses, and take thou whichever horse and arms thou chooseth in payment for thy service and thy gift." "Heaven reward thee, Lord," said the youth, "and this would be ample to repay services much greater than those I have rendered unto thee." And to the town went the youth, and he took the best and the most pleasant lodgings that he knew; and after that he went to the palace, having the horse and armour with him, and proceeded to the place where the Earl was, and told him all his adventure. "I go now, Lord," said he, "to meet the young man, and to conduct him to his lodging." "Go, gladly,"

said the Earl, "and right joyfully shall he be received here, if he so come." And the youth went to meet Geraint, and told him that he would be received gladly by the Earl in his own palace; but he would go only to his lodgings. And he had a goodly chamber, in which was plenty of straw, and drapery, and a spacious and commodious place he had for the horses; and the youth prepared for them plenty of provender. And after they had disarrayed themselves, Geraint spoke thus to Enid: "Go," said he, "to the other side of the chamber, and come not to this side of the house; and thou mayest call to thee the woman of the house, if thou wilt." "I will do, Lord," said she, "as thou sayest." And thereupon the man of the house came to Geraint, and welcomed him. "Oh, chieftain," he said, "hast thou taken thy meal?" "I have," said he. Then the youth spoke to him, and inquired if he would not drink something before he met the Earl. "Truly I will," said he. So the youth went into the town, and brought them drink. And they drank. "I must needs sleep," said Geraint. "Well," said the youth; "and whilst thou sleepest, I will go to see the Earl." "Go, gladly," he said, "and come here again when I require thee." And Geraint went to sleep; and so did Enid also.

And the youth came to the place where the Earl was, and the Earl asked him where the lodgings of the knight were, and he told him. "I must go," said the youth, "to wait on him in the evening." "Go," answered the Earl, "and greet him well from me, and tell him that in the evening I will go to see him." "This will I do," said the youth. So he came when it was time for them to awake. And they arose, and went forth. And when it was time for them to take their food, they took it. And the youth served them. And Geraint inquired of the man of the house, whether there were any of his companions that he wished to invite to him, and he said that there were. "Bring them hither, and entertain them at my cost with the best thou canst buy in the town."

And the man of the house brought there those whom he chose, and feasted them at Geraint's expense. Thereupon, behold, the Earl came to visit Geraint, and his twelve honourable knights with him. And Geraint rose up, and welcomed him. "Heaven preserve thee," said the Earl. Then they all sat down according to their precedence in honour. And the Earl conversed with Geraint, and inquired of him the object of his journey. "I have none," he replied, "but to seek adventures, and to follow my own inclination." Then the Earl cast his eye upon Enid, and he looked at her steadfastly. And he thought he had never seen a maiden fairer or more comely than she. And he set all his thoughts and his affections upon her. Then he asked of Geraint, "Have I thy permission to go and converse with yonder maiden, for I see that she is apart from thee?" "Thou hast it gladly," said he. So the Earl went to the place where the maiden was, and spake with her. "Ah, maiden," said he, "it cannot be pleasant to thee to journey thus with yonder man!" "It is not unpleasant to me," said she, "to journey the same road that he journeys." "Thou hast neither youths nor maidens to serve thee," said he. "Truly," she replied, "it is more pleasant for me to follow yonder man, than to be served by youths and maidens." "I will give thee good counsel," said he. "All my Earldom will I place in thy possession, if thou wilt dwell with me." "That will I not, by Heaven," she said; "yonder man was the first to whom my faith was ever pledged; and shall I prove inconstant to him?" "Thou art in the wrong," said the Earl; "if I slay the man yonder, I can keep thee with me as long as I choose; and when thou no longer pleasest me I can turn thee away. But if thou goest with me by thine own good will, I protest that our union shall continue eternal and undivided as long as I remain alive." Then she pondered these words of his, and she considered that it was advisable to encourage him in his request. "Behold, then, chieftain, this is most expedient for thee to do to save me any needless imputation; come here to-morrow, and take me away as though I knew nothing thereof." "I will do so," said he. So he arose, and took his leave, and went forth with his attendants. And she told not then to Geraint any of the conversation which she had had with the Earl, lest it should rouse his anger, and cause him uneasiness and care.

And at the usual hour they went to sleep. And at the beginning of the night Enid slept a little; and at midnight she arose, and placed all Geraint's armour together, so that it might be ready to

put on. And although fearful of her errand, she came to the side of Geraint's bed; and she spoke to him softly and gently, saying, "My Lord, arise, and clothe thyself, for these were the words of the Earl to me, and his intention concerning me." So she told Geraint all that had passed. And although he was wroth with her, he took warning, and clothed himself. And she lighted a candle, that he might have light to do so. "Leave there the candle," said he, "and desire the man of the house to come here." Then she went, and the man of the house came to him. "Dost thou know how much I owe thee?" asked Geraint. "I think thou owest but little." "Take the eleven horses and the eleven suits of armour." "Heaven reward thee, lord," said he, "but I spent not the value of one suit of armour upon thee." "For that reason," said he, "thou wilt be the richer. And now, wilt thou come to guide me out of the town?" "I will, gladly," said he, "and in which direction dost thou intend to go?" "I wish to leave the town by a different way from that by which I entered it." So the man of the lodgings accompanied him as far as he desired. Then he bade the maiden to go on before him; and she did so, and went straight forward, and his host returned home. And he had only just reached his house, when, behold, the greatest tumult approached that was ever heard. And when he looked out, he saw fourscore knights in complete armour around the house, with the Earl Dwnn at their head. "Where is the knight that was here?" said the Earl. "By thy hand," said he, "he went hence some time ago." "Wherefore, villain," said he, "didst thou let him go without informing me?" "My Lord, thou didst not command me to do so, else would I not have allowed him to depart." "What way dost thou think that he took?" "I know not, except that he went along the high road." And they turned their horses' heads that way, and seeing the tracks of the horses upon the high road, they followed. And when the maiden beheld the dawning of the day, she looked behind her, and saw vast clouds of dust coming nearer and nearer to her. And thereupon she became uneasy, and she thought that it was the Earl and his host coming after them. And thereupon she beheld a knight appearing through the mist. "By my faith," said she, "though he should slay me, it were better for me to receive my death at his hands, than to see him killed without warning him. My Lord," she said to him, "seest thou yonder man hastening after thee, and many others with him?" "I do see him," said he; "and in despite of all my orders, I see that thou wilt never keep silence." Then he turned upon the knight, and with the first thrust he threw him down under his horse's feet. And as long as there remained one of the fourscore knights, he overthrew every one of them at the first onset. And from the weakest to the strongest, they all attacked him one after the other, except the Earl: and last of all the Earl came against him also. And he broke his lance, and then he broke a second. But Geraint turned upon him, and struck him with his lance upon the centre of his shield, so that by that single thrust the shield was split, and all his armour broken, and he himself was brought over his horse's crupper to the ground, and was in peril of his life. And Geraint drew near to him; and at the noise of the trampling of his horse the Earl revived. "Mercy, Lord," said he to Geraint. And Geraint granted him mercy. But through the hardness of the ground where they had fallen, and the violence of the stroke which they had received, there was not a single knight amongst them that escaped without receiving a fall, mortally severe, and grievously painful, and desperately wounding, from the hand of Geraint.

And Geraint journeyed along the high road that was before him, and the maiden went on first; and near them they beheld a valley which was the fairest ever seen, and which had a large river running through it; and there was a bridge over the river, and the high road led to the bridge. And above the bridge upon the opposite side of the river, they beheld a fortified town, the fairest ever seen. And as they approached the bridge, Geraint saw coming towards him from a thick copse a man mounted upon a large and lofty steed, even of pace and spirited though tractable. "Ah, knight," said Geraint, "whence comest thou?" "I come," said he, "from the valley below us." "Canst thou tell me," said Geraint, "who is the owner of this fair valley and yonder walled town?" "I will tell thee, willingly," said he. "Gwiffert Petit he is called by the Franks, but the Cymry call him the Little King." "Can I go by

yonder bridge," said Geraint, "and by the lower highway that is beneath the town?" Said the knight, "Thou canst not go by his tower on the other side of the bridge, unless thou dost intend to combat him; because it is his custom to encounter every knight that comes upon his lands." "I declare to Heaven," said Geraint, "that I will, nevertheless, pursue my journey that way." "If thou dost so," said the knight, "thou wilt probably meet with shame and disgrace in reward for thy daring." Then Geraint proceeded along the road that led to the town, and the road brought him to a ground that was hard, and rugged, and high, and ridgy. And as he journeyed thus, he beheld a knight following him upon a warhorse, strong, and large, and proudly-stepping, and wide-hoofed, and broad-chested. And he never saw a man of smaller stature than he who was upon the horse. And both he and his horse were completely armed. When he had overtaken Geraint, he said to him, "Tell me, chieftain, whether it is through ignorance or through presumption that thou seekest to insult my dignity, and to infringe my rules." "Nay," answered Geraint, "I knew not this road was forbid to any." "Thou didst know it," said the other; "come with me to my Court, to give me satisfaction." "That will I not, by my faith," said Geraint; "I would not go even to thy Lord's Court, excepting Arthur were thy Lord." "By the hand of Arthur himself," said the knight, "I will have satisfaction of thee, or receive my overthrow at thy hands." And immediately they charged one another. And a squire of his came to serve him with lances as he broke them. And they gave each other such hard and severe strokes that their shields lost all their colour. But it was very difficult for Geraint to fight with him on account of his small size, for he was hardly able to get a full aim at him with all the efforts he could make. And they fought thus until their horses were brought down upon their knees; and at length Geraint threw the knight headlong to the ground; and then they fought on foot, and they gave one another blows so boldly fierce, so frequent, and so severely powerful, that their helmets were pierced, and their skullcaps were broken, and their arms were shattered, and the light of their eyes was darkened by sweat and blood. At the last Geraint became enraged, and he called to him all his strength; and boldly angry, and swiftly resolute, and furiously determined, he lifted up his sword, and struck him on the crown of his head a blow so mortally painful, so violent, so fierce, and so penetrating, that it cut through all his head armour, and his skin, and his flesh, until it wounded the very bone, and the sword flew out of the hand of the Little King to the furthest end of the plain, and he besought Geraint that he would have mercy and compassion upon him. "Though thou hast been neither courteous nor just," said Geraint, "thou shalt have mercy, upon condition that thou wilt become my ally, and engage never to fight against me again, but to come to my assistance whenever thou hearest of my being in trouble." "This will I do, gladly, Lord," said he. So he pledged him his faith thereof. "And now, Lord, come with me," said he, "to my Court yonder, to recover from thy weariness and fatigue." "That will I not, by Heaven," said he.

Then Gwiffert Petit beheld Enid where she stood, and it grieved him to see one of her noble mien appear so deeply afflicted. And he said to Geraint, "My Lord, thou doest wrong not to take repose, and refresh thyself awhile; for, if thou meetest with any difficulty in thy present condition, it will not be easy for thee to surmount it." But Geraint would do no other than proceed on his journey, and he mounted his horse in pain, and all covered with blood. And the maiden went on first, and they proceeded towards the wood which they saw before them.

And the heat of the sun was very great, and through the blood and sweat, Geraint's armour cleaved to his flesh; and when they came into the wood, he stood under a tree, to avoid the sun's heat; and his wounds pained him more than they had done at the time when he received them. And the maiden stood under another tree. And lo! they heard the sound of horns, and a tumultuous noise; and the occasion of it was, that Arthur and his company had come down to the wood. And while Geraint was considering which way he should go to avoid them, behold, he was espied by a foot-page, who was an attendant on the Steward of the Household; and he went to the Steward, and told him what kind of man he had seen in the wood. Then the Steward caused his horse

to be saddled, and he took his lance and his shield, and went to the place where Geraint was. "Ah, knight!" said he, "what dost thou here?" "I am standing under a shady tree, to avoid the heat and the rays of the sun." "Wherefore is thy journey, and who art thou?" "I seek adventures, and go where I list." "Indeed," said Kai; "then come with me to see Arthur, who is here hard by." "That will I not, by Heaven," said Geraint. "Thou must needs come," said Kai. Then Geraint knew who he was, but Kai did not know Geraint. And Kai attacked Geraint as best he could. And Geraint became wroth, and he struck him with the shaft of his lance, so that he rolled headlong to the ground. But chastisement worse than this would he not inflict on him.

Scared and wildly Kai arose, and he mounted his horse, and went back to his lodging. And thence he proceeded to Gwalchmai's tent. "Oh, Sir," said he to Gwalchmai, "I was told by one of the attendants, that he saw in the wood above a wounded knight, having on battered armour; and if thou dost right, thou wilt go and see if this be true." "I care not if I do so," said Gwalchmai. "Take, then, thy horse, and some of thy armour," said Kai; "for I hear that he is not over courteous to those who approach him." So Gwalchmai took his spear and his shield, and mounted his horse, and came to the spot where Geraint was. "Sir Knight," said he, "wherefore is thy journey?" "I journey for my own pleasure, and to seek the adventures of the world." "Wilt thou tell me who thou art; or wilt thou come and visit Arthur, who is near at hand?" "I will make no alliance with thee, nor will I go and visit Arthur," said he. And he knew that it was Gwalchmai, but Gwalchmai knew him not. "I purpose not to leave thee," said Gwalchmai, "till I know who thou art." And he charged him with his lance, and struck him on his shield, so that the shaft was shivered into splinters, and their horses were front to front. Then Gwalchmai gazed fixedly upon him, and he knew him. "Ah, Geraint," said he, "is it thou that art here?" "I am not Geraint," said he. "Geraint thou art, by Heaven," he replied, "and a wretched and insane expedition is this." Then he looked around, and beheld Enid, and he welcomed her gladly. "Geraint," said Gwalchmai, "come thou and see Arthur; he is thy lord and thy cousin." "I will not," said he, "for I am not in a fit state to go and see any one." Thereupon, behold, one of the pages came after Gwalchmai to speak to him. So he sent him to apprise Arthur that Geraint was there wounded, and that he would not go to visit him, and that it was pitiable to see the plight that he was in. And this he did without Geraint's knowledge, inasmuch as he spoke in a whisper to the page. "Entreat Arthur," said he, "to have his tent brought near to the road, for he will not meet him willingly, and it is not easy to compel him in the mood he is in." So the page came to Arthur, and told him this. And he caused his tent to be removed unto the side of the road. And the maiden rejoiced in her heart. And Gwalchmai led Geraint onwards along the road, till they came to the place where Arthur was encamped, and the pages were pitching his tent by the roadside. "Lord," said Geraint, "all hail unto thee." "Heaven prosper thee; and who art thou?" said Arthur. "It is Geraint," said Gwalchmai, "and of his own free will would he not come to meet thee." "Verily," said Arthur, "he is bereft of his reason." Then came Enid, and saluted Arthur. "Heaven protect thee," said he. And thereupon he caused one of the pages to take her from her horse. "Alas! Enid," said Arthur, "what expedition is this?" "I know not, Lord," said she, "save that it behoves me to journey by the same road that he journeys." "My Lord," said Geraint, "with thy permission we will depart." "Whither wilt thou go?" said Arthur. "Thou canst not proceed now, unless it be unto thy death." "He will not suffer himself to be invited by me," said Gwalchmai. "But by me he will," said Arthur; "and, moreover, he does not go from here until he is healed." "I had rather, Lord," said Geraint, "that thou wouldst let me go forth." "That will I not, I declare to Heaven," said he. Then he caused a maiden to be sent for to conduct Enid to the tent where Gwenhwyvar's chamber was. And Gwenhwyvar and all her women were joyful at her coming; and they took off her riding-dress, and placed other garments upon her. Arthur also called Kadyrieith, and ordered him to pitch a tent for Geraint and the physicians; and he enjoined him to provide him with abundance of all that might be requisite for him. And Kadyrieith did as he had commanded him. And

Morgan Tud and his disciples were brought to Geraint.

And Arthur and his hosts remained there nearly a month, whilst Geraint was being healed. And when he was fully recovered, Geraint came to Arthur, and asked his permission to depart. "I know not if thou art quite well." "In truth I am, Lord," said Geraint. "I shall not believe thee concerning that, but the physicians that were with thee." So Arthur caused the physicians to be summoned to him, and asked them if it were true. "It is true, Lord," said Morgan Tud. So the next day Arthur permitted him to go forth, and he pursued his journey. And on the same day Arthur removed thence. And Geraint desired Enid to go on, and to keep before him, as she had formerly done. And she went forward along the high road. And as they journeyed thus, they heard an exceeding loud wailing near to them. "Stay thou here," said he, "and I will go and see what is the cause of this wailing." "I will," said she. Then he went forward unto an open glade that was near the road. And in the glade he saw two horses, one having a man's saddle, and the other a woman's saddle upon it. And, behold, there was a knight lying dead in his armour, and a young damsel in a riding-dress standing over him, lamenting. "Ah! Lady," said Geraint, "what hath befallen thee?" "Behold," she answered, "I journeyed here with my beloved husband, when, lo! three giants came upon us, and without any cause in the world, they slew him." "Which way went they hence?" said Geraint. "Yonder by the high road," she replied. So he returned to Enid. "Go," said he, "to the lady that is below yonder, and await me there till I come." She was sad when he ordered her to do thus, but nevertheless she went to the damsel, whom it was ruth to hear, and she felt certain that Geraint would never return. Meanwhile Geraint followed the giants, and overtook them. And each of them was greater of stature than three other men, and a huge club was on the shoulder of each. Then he rushed upon one of them, and thrust his lance through his body. And having drawn it forth again, he pierced another of them through likewise. But the third turned upon him, and struck him with his club, so that he split his shield, and crushed his shoulder, and opened his wounds anew, and all his blood began to flow from him. But Geraint drew his sword, and attacked the giant, and gave him a blow on the crown of his head so severe, and fierce, and violent, that his head and his neck were split down to his shoulders, and he fell dead. So Geraint left him thus, and returned to Enid. And when he saw her, he fell down lifeless from his horse. Piercing, and loud, and thrilling was the cry that Enid uttered. And she came and stood over him where he had fallen. And at the sound of her cries came the Earl of Limours, and the host that journeyed with him, whom her lamentations brought out of their road. And the Earl said to Enid, "Alas, Lady, what hath befallen thee?" "Ah! good Sir," said she, "the only man I have loved, or ever shall love, is slain." Then he said to the other, "And what is the cause of thy grief?" "They have slain my beloved husband also," said she. "And who was it that slew them?" "Some giants," she answered, "slew my best-beloved, and the other knight went in pursuit of them, and came back in the state thou seest, his blood flowing excessively; but it appears to me that he did not leave the giants without killing some of them, if not all." The Earl caused the knight that was dead to be buried, but he thought that there still remained some life in Geraint; and to see if he yet would live, he had him carried with him in the hollow of his shield, and upon a bier. And the two damsels went to the Court; and when they arrived there, Geraint was placed upon a litter-couch in front of the table that was in the hall. Then they all took off their travelling gear, and the Earl besought Enid to do the same, and to clothe herself in other garments. "I will not, by Heaven," said she. "Ah! Lady," said he, "be not so sorrowful for this matter." "It were hard to persuade me to be otherwise," said she. "I will act towards thee in such wise, that thou needest not be sorrowful, whether yonder knight live or die. Behold, a good Earldom, together with myself, will I bestow on thee; be, therefore, happy and joyful." "I declare to Heaven," said she, "that henceforth I shall never be joyful while I live." "Come, then," said he, "and eat." "No, by Heaven, I will not," she answered. "But, by Heaven, thou shalt," said he. So he took her with him to the table against her will, and many times desired her to eat. "I call Heaven to witness," said she, "that I will not eat until the man that is upon

yonder bier shall eat likewise." "Thou canst not fulfil that," said the Earl, "yonder man is dead already." "I will prove that I can," said she. Then he offered her a goblet of liquor. "Drink this goblet," he said, "and it will cause thee to change thy mind." "Evil betide me," she answered, "if I drink aught until he drink also." "Truly," said the Earl, "it is of no more avail for me to be gentle with thee than ungentle." And he gave her a box on the ear. Thereupon she raised a loud and piercing shriek, and her lamentations were much greater than they had been before, for she considered in her mind that had Geraint been alive, he durst not have struck her thus. But, behold, at the sound of her cry, Geraint revived from his swoon, and he sat up on the bier, and finding his sword in the hollow of his shield, he rushed to the place where the Earl was, and struck him a fiercely-wounding, severely-venomous, and sternly-smiting blow upon the crown of his head, so that he clove him in twain, until his sword was stayed by the table. Then all left the board, and fled away. And this was not so much through fear of the living as through the dread they felt at seeing the dead man rise up to slay them. And Geraint looked upon Enid, and he was grieved for two causes; one was, to see that Enid had lost her colour and her wonted aspect, and the other, to know that she was in the right. "Lady," said he, "knowest thou where our horses are?" "I know, Lord, where thy horse is," she replied, "but I know not where is the other. Thy horse is in the house yonder." So he went to the house, and brought forth his horse, and mounted him, and took up Enid from the ground, and placed her upon the horse with him. And he rode forward. And their road lay between two hedges. And the night was gaining on the day. And lo! they saw behind them the shafts of spears betwixt them and the sky, and they heard the trampling of horses, and the noise of a host approaching. "I hear something following us," said he, "and I will put thee on the other side of the hedge." And thus he did. And thereupon, behold, a knight pricked towards him, and couched his lance. When Enid saw this, she cried out, saying, "Oh! chieftain, whoever thou art, what renown wilt thou gain by slaying a dead man?" "Oh! Heaven," said he, "is it Geraint?" "Yes, in truth," said she. "And who art thou?" "I am the Little King," he answered, "coming to thy assistance, for I heard that thou wast in trouble. And if thou hadst followed my advice, none of these hardships would have befallen thee." "Nothing can happen," said Geraint, "without the will of Heaven, though much good results from counsel." "Yes," said the Little King, "and I know good counsel for thee now. Come with me to the court of a son-in-law of my sister, which is near here, and thou shalt have the best medical assistance in the kingdom." "I will do so gladly," said Geraint. And Enid was placed upon the horse of one of the Little King's squires, and they went forward to the Baron's palace. And they were received there with gladness, and they met with hospitality and attention. And the next morning they went to seek physicians; and it was not long before they came, and they attended Geraint until he was perfectly well. And while Geraint was under medical care, the Little King caused his armour to be repaired, until it was as good as it had ever been. And they remained there a fortnight and a month.

Then the Little King said to Geraint, "Now will we go towards my own Court, to take rest, and amuse ourselves." "Not so," said Geraint, "we will first journey for one day more, and return again." "With all my heart," said the Little King, "do thou go then." And early in the day they set forth. And more gladly and more joyfully did Enid journey with them that day than she had ever done. And they came to the main road. And when they reached a place where the road divided in two, they beheld a man on foot coming towards them along one of these roads, and Gwifert asked the man whence he came. "I come," said he, "from an errand in the country." "Tell me," said Geraint, "which is the best for me to follow of these two roads?" "That is the best for thee to follow," answered he, "for if thou goest by this one, thou wilt never return. Below us," said he, "there is a hedge of mist, and within it are enchanted games, and no one who has gone there has ever returned. And the Court of the Earl Owain is there, and he permits no one to go to lodge in the town, except he will go to his Court." "I declare to Heaven," said Geraint, "that we will take the lower road." And they went along it until they came

to the town. And they took the fairest and pleasantest place in the town for their lodging. And while they were thus, behold, a young man came to them, and greeted them. "Heaven be propitious to thee," said they. "Good Sirs," said he, "what preparations are you making here?" "We are taking up our lodging," said they, "to pass the night." "It is not the custom with him who owns the town," he answered, "to permit any of gentle birth, unless they come to stay in his Court, to abide here; therefore, come ye to the Court." "We will come, gladly," said Geraint. And they went with the page, and they were joyfully received. And the Earl came to the hall to meet them, and he commanded the tables to be laid. And they washed, and sat down. And this is the order in which they sat: Geraint on one side of the Earl, and Enid on the other side, and next to Enid the Little King, and then the Countess next to Geraint; and all after that as became their rank. Then Geraint recollected the games, and thought that he should not go to them; and on that account he did not eat. Then the Earl looked upon Geraint, and considered, and he bethought him that his not eating was because of the games, and it grieved him that he had ever established those games, were it only on account of losing such a youth as Geraint. And if Geraint had asked him to abolish the games, he would gladly have done so. Then the Earl said to Geraint, "What thought occupies thy mind, that thou dost not eat? If thou hesitatest about going to the games, thou shalt not go, and no other of thy rank shall ever go either." "Heaven reward thee," said Geraint, "but I wish nothing better than to go to the games, and to be shown the way thither." "If that is what thou dost prefer, thou shalt obtain it willingly." "I do prefer it, indeed," said he. Then they ate, and they were amply served, and they had a variety of gifts, and abundance of liquor. And when they had finished eating they arose. And Geraint called for his horse and his armour, and he accoutred both himself and his horse. And all the hosts went forth until they came to the side of the hedge, and the hedge was so lofty, that it reached as high as they could see in the air, and upon every stake in the hedge, except two, there was the head of a man, and the number of stakes throughout the hedge was very great. Then said the Little King, "May no one go in with the chieftain?" "No one may," said Earl Owain. "Which way can I enter?" inquired Geraint. "I know not," said Owain, "but enter by the way that thou wilt, and that seemeth easiest to thee."

Then fearlessly and unhesitatingly Geraint dashed forward into the mist. And on leaving the mist, he came to a large orchard; and in the orchard he saw an open space, wherein was a tent of red satin; and the door of the tent was open, and an apple-tree stood in front of the door of the tent; and on a branch of the apple-tree hung a huge hunting-horn. Then he dismounted, and went into the tent; and there was no one in the tent save one maiden sitting in a golden chair, and another chair was opposite to her, empty. And Geraint went to the empty chair, and sat down therein. "Ah! chieftain," said the maiden, "I would not counsel thee to sit in that chair." "Wherefore?" said Geraint. "The man to whom that chair belongs has never suffered another to sit in it." "I care not," said Geraint, "though it displease him that I sit in the chair." And thereupon they heard a mighty tumult around the tent. And Geraint looked to see what was the cause of the tumult. And he beheld without a knight mounted upon a warhorse, proudly snorting, high-mettled, and large of bone; and a robe of honour in two parts was upon him and upon his horse, and beneath it was plenty of armour. "Tell me, chieftain," said he to Geraint, "who it was that bade thee sit there?" "Myself," answered he. "It was wrong of thee to do me this shame and disgrace. Arise, and do me satisfaction for thine insolence." Then Geraint arose; and they encountered immediately; and they broke a set of lances, and a second set, and a third; and they gave each other fierce and frequent strokes; and at last Geraint became enraged, and he urged on his horse, and rushed upon him, and gave him a thrust on the centre of his shield, so that it was split, and so that the head of his lance went through his armour, and his girths were broken, and he himself was borne headlong to the ground the length of Geraint's lance and arm, over his horse's crupper. "Oh, my Lord!" said he, "thy mercy, and thou shalt have what thou wilt." "I only desire," said Geraint, "that this game shall no longer exist here, nor the hedge of mist, nor magic, nor enchantment." "Thou shalt

have this gladly, Lord," he replied. "Cause, then, the mist to disappear from this place," said Geraint. "Sound yonder horn," said he, "and when thou soundest it, the mist will vanish; but it will not go hence unless the horn be blown by the knight by whom I am vanquished." And sad and sorrowful was Enid where she remained, through anxiety concerning Geraint. Then Geraint went and sounded the horn. And at the first blast he gave, the mist vanished. And all the hosts came together, and they all became reconciled to each other. And the Earl invited Geraint and the Little King to stay with him that night. And the next morning they separated. And Geraint went towards his own dominions; and thenceforth he reigned prosperously, and his warlike fame and splendour lasted with renown and honour both to him and to Enid from that time forth.

KILHWCH AND OLWEN OR THE TWRCH TRWYTH

Kilydd the son of Prince Kelyddon desired a wife as a helpmate, and the wife that he chose was Goleuddydd, the daughter of Prince Anlawdd. And after their union, the people put up prayers that they might have an heir. And they had a son through the prayers of the people. From the time of her pregnancy Goleuddydd became wild, and wandered about, without habitation; but when her delivery was at hand, her reason came back to her. Then she went to a mountain where there was a swineherd, keeping a herd of swine. And through fear of the swine the queen was delivered. And the swineherd took the boy, and brought him to the palace; and he was christened, and they called him Kilhwch, because he had been found in a swine's burrow. Nevertheless the boy was of gentle lineage, and cousin unto Arthur; and they put him out to nurse.

After this the boy's mother, Goleuddydd, the daughter of Prince Anlawdd, fell sick. Then she called her husband unto her, and said to him, "Of this sickness I shall die, and thou wilt take another wife. Now wives are the gift of the Lord, but it would be wrong for thee to harm thy son. Therefore I charge thee that thou take not a wife until thou see a briar with two blossoms upon my grave." And this he promised her. Then she besought him to dress her grave every year, that nothing might grow thereon. So the queen died. Now the king sent an attendant every morning to see if anything were growing upon the grave. And at the end of the seventh year the master neglected that which he had promised to the queen.

One day the king went to hunt, and he rode to the place of burial to see the grave, and to know if it were time that he should take a wife; and the king saw the briar. And when he saw it, the king took counsel where he should find a wife. Said one of his counsellors, "I know a wife that will suit thee well, and she is the wife of King Doged." And they resolved to go to seek her; and they slew the king, and brought away his wife and one daughter that she had along with her. And they conquered the king's lands.

On a certain day, as the lady walked abroad, she came to the house of an old crone that dwelt in the town, and that had no tooth in her head. And the queen said to her, "Old woman, tell me that which I shall ask thee, for the love of Heaven. Where are the children of the man who has carried me away by violence?" Said the crone, "He has not children." Said the queen, "Woe is me, that I should have come to one who is childless!" Then said the hag, "Thou needest not lament on account of that, for there is a prediction he shall have an heir by thee, and by none other. Moreover, be not sorrowful, for he has one son."

The lady returned home with joy; and she asked her consort, "Wherefore hast thou concealed thy children from me?" The king said, "I will do so no longer." And he sent messengers for his son, and he was brought to the Court. His stepmother said unto him, "It were well for thee to have a wife, and I have a daughter who is sought of every man of renown in the world." "I am not yet of an age to wed," answered the youth. Then said she unto him, "I declare to thee, that it is thy destiny not to be suited with a wife until thou obtain Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr." And the youth blushed, and the love of the maiden diffused itself through all his frame, although he had never seen

her. And his father inquired of him, "What has come over thee, my son, and what aileth thee?" "My stepmother has declared to me that I shall never have a wife until I obtain Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr." "That will be easy for thee," answered his father. "Arthur is thy cousin. Go, therefore, unto Arthur, to cut thy hair, and ask this of him as a boon."

And the youth pricked forth upon a steed with head dappled grey, of four winters old, firm of limb, with shell-formed hoofs, having a bridle of linked gold on his head, and upon him a saddle of costly gold. And in the youth's hand were two spears of silver, sharp, well-tempered, headed with steel, three ells in length, of an edge to wound the wind, and cause blood to flow, and swifter than the fall of the dewdrop from the blade of reed-grass upon the earth when the dew of June is at the heaviest. A gold-hilted sword was upon his thigh, the blade of which was of gold, bearing a cross of inlaid gold of the hue of the lightning of heaven: his war-horn was of ivory. Before him were two brindled white-breasted greyhounds, having strong collars of rubies about their necks, reaching from the shoulder to the ear. And the one that was on the left side bounded across to the right side, and the one on the right to the left, and like two sea-swallows sported around him. And his courser cast up four sods with his four hoofs, like four swallows in the air, about his head, now above, now below. About him was a four-cornered cloth of purple, and an apple of gold was at each corner, and every one of the apples was of the value of an hundred kine. And there was precious gold of the value of three hundred kine upon his shoes, and upon his stirrups, from his knee to the tip of his toe. And the blade of grass bent not beneath him, so light was his courser's tread as he journeyed towards the gate of Arthur's Palace.

Spoke the youth, "Is there a porter?" "There is; and if thou holdest not thy peace, small will be thy welcome. I am Arthur's porter every first day of January. And during every other part of the year but this, the office is filled by Huandaw, and Gogigwc, and Laeskenym, and Pennpingyon, who goes upon his head to save his feet, neither towards the sky nor towards the earth, but like a rolling stone upon the floor of the court." "Open the portal." "I will not open it." "Wherefore not?" "The knife is in the meat, and the drink is in the horn, and there is revelry in Arthur's Hall, and none may enter therein but the son of a king of a privileged country, or a craftsman bringing his craft. But there will be refreshment for thy dogs, and for thy horses; and for thee there will be collops cooked and peppered, and luscious wine and mirthful songs, and food for fifty men shall be brought unto thee in the guest chamber, where the stranger and the sons of other countries eat, who come not unto the precincts of the Palace of Arthur. Thou wilt fare no worse there than thou wouldest with Arthur in the Court. A lady shall smooth thy couch, and shall lull thee with songs; and early to-morrow morning, when the gate is open for the multitude that come hither to-day, for thee shall it be opened first, and thou mayest sit in the place that thou shalt choose in Arthur's Hall, from the upper end to the lower." Said the youth, "That will I not do. If thou openest the gate, it is well. If thou dost not open it, I will bring disgrace upon thy Lord, and evil report upon thee. And I will set up three shouts at this very gate, than which none were ever more deadly, from the top of Pengwaed in Cornwall to the bottom of Dinsol, in the North, and to Esgair Oervel, in Ireland. And all the women in this Palace that are pregnant shall lose their offspring; and such as are not pregnant, their hearts shall be turned by illness, so that they shall never bear children from this day forward." "What clamour soever thou mayest make," said Glewlwyd Gavaelwaur, "against the laws of Arthur's Palace shalt thou not enter therein, until I first go and speak with Arthur."

Then Glewlwyd went into the Hall. And Arthur said to him, "Hast thou news from the gate?"—"Half of my life is past, and half of thine. I was heretofore in Kaer Se and Asse, in Sach and Salach, in Lotor and Fotor; and I have been heretofore in India the Great and India the Lesser; and I was in the battle of Dau Ynyr, when the twelve hostages were brought from Llychlyn. And I have also been in Europe, and in Africa, and in the islands of Corsica, and in Caer Brythwch, and Brythach, and Verthach; and I was present when formerly thou didst slay the family of Clis the son of Merin, and when thou didst slay Mil Du the son of Ducum, and

when thou didst conquer Greece in the East. And I have been in Caer Oeth and Annoeth, and in Caer Nevenhyr; nine supreme sovereigns, handsome men, saw we there, but never did I behold a man of equal dignity with him who is now at the door of the portal." Then said Arthur, "If walking thou didst enter in here, return thou running. And every one that beholds the light, and every one that opens and shuts the eye, let them shew him respect, and serve him, some with gold-mounted drinking-horns, others with collops cooked and peppered, until food and drink can be prepared for him. It is unbecoming to keep such a man as thou sayest he is, in the wind and the rain." Said Kai, "By the hand of my friend, if thou wouldest follow my counsel, thou wouldest not break through the laws of the Court because of him." "Not so, blessed Kai. It is an honour to us to be resorted to, and the greater our courtesy the greater will be our renown, and our fame, and our glory."

And Glewlwyd came to the gate, and opened the gate before him; and although all dismounted upon the horseblock at the gate, yet did he not dismount, but rode in upon his charger. Then said Kilhwch, "Greeting be unto thee, Sovereign Ruler of this Island; and be this greeting no less unto the lowest than unto the highest, and be it equally unto thy guests, and thy warriors, and thy chieftains—let all partake of it as completely as thyself. And complete be thy favour, and thy fame, and thy glory, throughout all this Island." "Greeting unto thee also," said Arthur; "sit thou between two of my warriors, and thou shalt have minstrels before thee, and thou shalt enjoy the privileges of a king born to a throne, as long as thou remainest here. And when I dispense my presents to the visitors and strangers in this Court, they shall be in thy hand at my commencing." Said the youth, "I came not here to consume meat and drink; but if I obtain the boon that I seek, I will requite it thee, and extol thee; and if I have it not, I will bear forth thy dispraise to the four quarters of the world, as far as thy renown has extended." Then said Arthur, "Since thou wilt not remain here, chieftain, thou shalt receive the boon whatsoever thy tongue may name, as far as the wind dries, and the rain moistens, and the sun revolves, and the sea encircles, and the earth extends; save only my ship; and my mantle; and Caledwllch, my sword; and Rhongomyant, my lance; and Wynebgwrthucher, my shield; and Carnwenhau, my dagger; and Gwenhwyvar, my wife. By the truth of Heaven, thou shalt have it cheerfully, name what thou wilt." "I would that thou bless my hair." "That shall be granted thee."

And Arthur took a golden comb, and scissors, whereof the loops were of silver, and he combed his hair. And Arthur inquired of him who he was. "For my heart warms unto thee, and I know that thou art come of my blood. Tell me, therefore, who thou art." "I will tell thee," said the youth. "I am Kilhwch, the son of Kilydd, the son of Prince Kelyddon, by Goleuddydd, my mother, the daughter of Prince Anlawdd." "That is true," said Arthur; "thou art my cousin. Whatsoever boon thou mayest ask, thou shalt receive, be it what it may that thy tongue shall name." "Pledge the truth of Heaven and the faith of thy kingdom thereof." "I pledge it thee, gladly." "I crave of thee then, that thou obtain for me Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr; and this boon I likewise seek at the hands of thy warriors. I seek it from Kai, and Bedwyr, and Greidawl Galldonyd, and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl, and Greid the son of Eri, and Kynddelig Kyvarwydd, and Tathal Twyll Goleu, and Maelwys the son of Baeddan, and Crychwr the son of Nes, and Cubert the son of Daere, and Percos the son of Poch, and Lluber Beuthach, and Corvil Bervach, and Gwynn the son of Nudd, and Edeyrn the son of Nudd, and Gadwy the son of Geraint, and Prince Fflewddur Fflam, and Ruawn Pebyr the son of Dorath, and Bradwen the son of Moren Mynawc, and Moren Mynawc himself, and Dalldav the son of Kimin Cōv, and the son of Alun Dyved, and the son of Saidi, and the son of Gwryon, and Uchtryd Ardywad Kad, and Kynwas Curvagyl, and Gwrhryr Gwarthegvras, and Isperyr Ewingath, and Galcoyt Govynynat, and Duach, and Grathach, and Nerthach, the sons of Gwawrddur Kyrvach (these men came forth from the confines of hell), and Kilydd Canhastyr, and Canastyr Kanllaw, and Cors Cant-Ewin, and Esgeir Gulhwch Govynkawn, and Drustwrn Haryn, and Glewlwyd Gavaelwawr, and Lloch Llawwynnyawc, and

Aunwas Adeiniawc, and Sinnoch the son of Seithved, and Gwenwynwyn the son of Naw, and Bedyw the son of Seithved, and Gobrwyr the son of Echel Vorddwyttwll, and Echel Vorddwyttwll himself, and Mael the son of Roycol, and Dadweir Dallpenn, and Garwyli the son of Gwythawc Gwyr, and Gwythawc Gwyr himself, and Gormant the son of Ricca, and Menw the son of Teirgwaedd, and Digon the son of Alar, and Selyf the son of Smoit, and Gusg the son of Atheu, and Nerth the son of Kedarn, and Drudwas the son of Tryffin, and Twrch the son of Perif, and Twrch the son of Annwas, and Iona king of France, and Sel the son of Selgi, and Teregud the son of Iaen, and Sulyen the son of Iaen, and Bradwen the son of Iaen, and Moren the son of Iaen, and Siawn the son of Iaen, and Cradawc the son of Iaen. (They were men of Caerdathal, of Arthur's kindred on his father's side.) Dirmyg the son of Kaw, and Justic the son of Kaw, and Etmic the son of Kaw, and Ang-hawd the son of Kaw, and Ovan the son of Kaw, and Kelin the son of Kaw, and Connyn the son of Kaw, and Mabsant the son of Kaw, and Gwyngad the son of Kaw, and Llwybyr the son of Kaw, and Coth the son of Kaw, and Meilic the son of Kaw, and Kynwas the son of Kaw, and Ardwyad the son of Kaw, and Ergyryad the son of Kaw, and Neb the son of Kaw, and Gilda the son of Kaw, and Calcas the son of Kaw, and Hueil the son of Kaw (he never yet made a request at the hand of any Lord). And Samson Vinsych, and Taliesin the chief of the bards, and Manawyddan the son of Llyr, and Llary the son of Prince Kasnar, and Ysperni the son of Fflergant king of Armórica, and Saranhon the son of Glythwyr, and Llaur Eilerw, and Annyanniawc the son of Menw the son of Teirgwaedd, and Gwynn the son of Nwyvre, and Fflam the son of Nwyvre, and Geraint the son of Erbin, and Ermid the son of Erbin, and Dyvel the son of Erbin, and Gwynn the son of Ermid, and Kyndrwnyn the son of Ermid, and Hyveidd Unlenn, and Eiddon Vawr Vrydic, and Reidwn Arwy, and Gormant the son of Ricca (Arthur's brother by his mother's side; the Penhynev of Cornwall was his father), and Llawnrdded Varvawc, and Nodawl Varyf Twrch, and Berth the son of Kado, and Rheidwn the son of Beli, and Iscovan Hael, and Iscawin the son of Panon, and Morvran the son of Tegid (no one struck him in the battle of Camlan by reason of his ugliness; all thought he was an auxiliary devil. Hair had he upon him like the hair of a stag). And Sandde Bryd Angel (no one touched him with a spear in the battle of Camlan because of his beauty; all thought he was a ministering angel). And Kynwyl Sant (the third man that escaped from the battle of Camlan, and he was the last who parted from Arthur on Hengroen his horse). And Uchtryd the son of Erim, and Eus the son of Erim, and Henwas Adeinawg the son of Erim, and Henbedestyr the son of Erim, and Sgilti Yscawndroed the son of Erim. (Unto these three men belonged these three qualities,—With Henbedestyr there was not any one who could keep pace, either on horseback or on foot; with Henwas Adeinawg, no four-footed beast could run the distance of an acre, much less could it go beyond it; and as to Sgilti Yscawndroed, when he intended to go upon a message for his Lord, he never sought to find a path, but knowing whither he was to go, if his way lay through a wood he went along the tops of the trees. During his whole life, a blade of reed grass bent not beneath his feet, much less did one ever break, so lightly did he tread.) Teithi Hên the son of Gwynhan (his dominions were swallowed up by the sea, and he himself hardly escaped, and he came to Arthur; and his knife had this peculiarity, that from the time that he came there no haft would ever remain upon it, and owing to this a sickness came over him, and he pined away during the remainder of his life, and of this he died). And Carneddyr the son of Govynyn Hên, and Gwenwynwyn the son of Nav Gyssevin, Arthur's champion, and Llysgadrudd Emys, and Gwrbothu Hên (uncles unto Arthur were they, his mother's brothers). Kulvanawyd the son of Goryon, and Llenleawg Wyddel from the headland of Ganion, and Dyvynwal Moel, and Dunard king of the North, Teimron Twryf Bliant, and Tegvan Gloff, and Tegyr Talgellawg, Gwrdinal the son of Ebrei, and Morgant Hael, Gwystyl the son of Rhun the son of Nwython, and Llwyddeu the son of Nwython, and Gwydre the son of Llwyddeu (Gwenabwy the daughter of [Kaw] was his mother, Hueil his uncle stabbed him, and hatred was between Hueil and Arthur because of the wound). Drem the son of Dremidydd (when the gnat arose in the morning with the sun, he could see it from Gelli Wic in

Cornwall, as far off as Pen Blathaon in North Britain). And Eidyol the son of Ner, and Glwyddyn Saer (who constructed Ehangwen, Arthur's Hall). Kynyr Keinvarvawc (when he was told he had a son born he said to his wife, 'Damsel, if thy son be mine, his heart will be always cold, and there will be no warmth in his hands; and he will have another peculiarity, if he is my son he will always be stubborn; and he will have another peculiarity, when he carries a burden, whether it be large or small, no one will be able to see it, either before him or at his back; and he will have another peculiarity, no one will be able to resist fire and water so well as he will; and he will have another peculiarity, there will never be a servant or an officer equal to him'). Henwas, and Henwyneb (an old companion to Arthur). Gwallgoyc (another; when he came to a town, though there were three hundred houses in it, if he wanted anything, he would not let sleep come to the eyes of any one whilst he remained there). Berwyn the son of Gerenhir, and Paris king of France, and Osla Gyllellvawr (who bore a short broad dagger). When Arthur and his hosts came before a torrent, they would seek for a narrow place where they might pass the water, and would lay the sheathed dagger across the torrent, and it would form a bridge sufficient for the armies of the three Islands of Britain, and of the three islands adjacent, with their spoil). Gwyddawg the son of Menestyr (who slew Kai, and whom Arthur slew, together with his brothers, to revenge Kai). Garanwyn the son of Kai, and Amren the son of Bedwyr, and Ely Amyr, and Rheu Rhwyd Dyrys, and Rhun Rhudwyn, and Eli, and Trachmyr (Arthur's chief huntsmen). And Llwydeu the son of Kelcoed, and Hunabwy the son of Gwryon, and Gwynn Godyvron, and Gweir Datharweniddawg, and Gweir the son of Cadell the son of Talaryant, and Gweir Gwrhyd Ennwir, and Gweir Paladyr Hir (the uncles of Arthur, the brothers of his mother). The sons of Llwhc Llawwynnyawg (from beyond the raging sea). Llenlleawg Wyddel, and Arderchwag Prydain. Cas the son of Saidi, Gwrwan Gwallt Awwyn, and Gwylennhin the king of France, and Gwiltart the son of Oedd king of Ireland. Garselit Wyddel, Panawr Pen Bagad, and Ffleudor the son of Nav, Gwynnhyvar mayor of Cornwall and Devon (the ninth man that rallied the battle of Camlan). Keli and Kueli, and Gilla Coes Hydd (he would clear three hundred acres at one bound: the chief leaper of Ireland was he). Sol, and Gwadyr Ossol, and Gwadyr Odyeth. (Sol could stand all day upon one foot. Gwadyr Ossol, if he stood upon the top of the highest mountain in the world, it would become a level plain under his feet. Gwadyr Odyeth, the soles of his feet emitted sparks of fire when they struck upon things hard, like the heated mass when drawn out of the forge. He cleared the way for Arthur when he came to any stoppage.) Hিরerwm and Hирatrwм. (The day they went on a visit three Cantreys provided for their entertainment, and they feasted until noon and drank until night, when they went to sleep. And then they devoured the heads of the vermin through hunger, as if they had never eaten anything. When they made a visit they left neither the fat nor the lean, neither the hot nor the cold, the sour nor the sweet, the fresh nor the salt, the boiled nor the raw.) Huarwar the son of Aflawn (who asked Arthur such a boon as would satisfy him. It was the third great plague of Cornwall when he received it. None could get a smile from him but when he was satisfied). Gware Gwallt Euryn. The two cubs of Gast Rhymi, Gwyddrud and Gwyddneu Astrus. Sugyn the son of Sugnedydd (who would suck up the sea on which were three hundred ships so as to leave nothing but a dry strand. He was broad-chested). Rhacymwri, the attendant of Arthur (whatever barn he was shown, were there the produce of thirty ploughs within it, he would strike it with an iron flail until the rafters, the beams, and the boards were no better than the small oats in the mow upon the floor of the barn). Dygyflwng and Anoeth Veidawg. And Hir Eiddyl, and Hir Amreu (they were two attendants of Arthur). And Gwevyl the son of Gwestad (on the day that he was sad, he would let one of his lips drop below his waist, while he turned up the other like a cap upon his head). Uchtryd Varyf Draws (who spread his red untrimmed beard over the eight-and-forty rafters which were in Arthur's Hall). Elidyр Gyvarwydd. Yskyrdav and Yscudydd (two attendants of Gwenhwyvar were they. Their feet were swift as their thoughts when bearing a message). Brys the son of Bryssethach

(from the Hill of the Black Fernbrake in North Britain). And Grudlwyn Gorr. Bwlch, and Kyfwlch, and Sefwlch, the sons of Cleddyf Kyfwlch, the grandsons of Cleddyf Difwlch. (Their three shields were three gleaming glitterers; their three spears were three pointed piercers; their three swords were three grinding gashers; Glas, Glessic, and Gleisad. Their three dogs, Call, Cuall, and Cavall. Their three horses, Hwyrddwdd, and Drwgdyddw, and Llwyrdyddw. Their three wives, Och, and Garym, and Diaspad. Their three grandchildren, Lluched, and Neved, and Eisiwed. Their three daughters, Drwg, and Gwaeth, and Gwaethav Oll. Their three hand-maids, Eheubryd the daughter of Kyfwlch, Gorascwrn the daughter of Nerth, Ewaedan the daughter of Kynvelyn Keudawd Pwyll the half-man.) Dwnn Diessic Unbenn, Eiladyr the son of Pen Llarcau, Kynedyr Wyllt the son of Hettwn Talaryant, Sawyl Ben Uchel, Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, Gwalhaved the son of Gwyar, Gwrhыр Gwastawd Ieithoedd (to whom all tongues were known), and Ketherwm the Priest. Clust the son of Clustveinad (though he were buried seven cubits beneath the earth, he would hear the ant fifty miles off rise from her nest in the morning). Medyr the son of Methredydd (from Gelli Wic he could, in a twinkling, shoot the wren through the two legs upon Esgeir Oervel in Ireland). Gwiawn Llygad Cath (who could cut a haw from the eye of the gnat without hurting him). Ol the son of Olwydd (seven years before he was born his father's swine were carried off, and when he grew up a man he tracked the swine, and brought them back in seven herds). Bedwini the Bishop (who blessed Arthur's meat and drink). For the sake of the golden-chained daughters of this island. For the sake of Gwenhwyvar its chief lady, and Gwennhwyach her sister, and Rathtyeu the only daughter of Clemenhill, and Rhlemon the daughter of Kai, and Tannwen the daughter of Gweir Datharweniddawg. Gwenn Alarch the daughter of Kynwyl Canbwch. Eurneid the daughter of Clydno Eiddin. Eneuawc the daughter of Bedwyr. Enrydreg the daughter of Tudvathar. Gwennwledyr the daughter of Gwaledyr Kyrvach. Erddudnid the daughter of Tryffin. Eurwlwen the daughter of Gwdolwyn Gorr. Teleri the daughter of Peul. Indeg the daughter of Garwy Hir. Morvudd the daughter of Urien Rheged. Gwenllian Deg the majestic maiden. Creiddylad the daughter of Lludd Llaw Ereint. (She was the most splendid maiden in the three Islands of the mighty, and in the three Islands adjacent, and for her Gwythyr the son of Greidawl and Gwynn the son of Nudd fight every first of May until the day of doom.) Ellylw the daughter of Neol Kynn-Crog (she lived three ages). Essyllt Vinwen and Essyllt Vingul." And all these did Kilhwch the son of Kilydd adjure to obtain his boon.

Then said Arthur, "Oh! chieftain, I have never heard of the maiden of whom thou speakest, nor of her kindred, but I will gladly send messengers in search of her. Give me time to seek her." And the youth said, "I will willingly grant from this night to that at the end of the year to do so." Then Arthur sent messengers to every land within his dominions to seek for the maiden; and at the end of the year Arthur's messengers returned without having gained any knowledge or intelligence concerning Olwen more than on the first day. Then said Kilhwch, "Every one has received his boon, and I yet lack mine. I will depart and bear away thy honour with me." Then said Kai, "Rash chieftain! dost thou reproach Arthur? Go with us, and we will not part until thou dost either confess that the maiden exists not in the world, or until we obtain her." Thereupon Kai rose up. Kai had this peculiarity, that his breath lasted nine nights and nine days under water, and he could exist nine nights and nine days without sleep. A wound from Kai's sword no physician could heal. Very subtle was Kai. When it pleased him he could render himself as tall as the highest tree in the forest. And he had another peculiarity,—so great was the heat of his nature, that, when it rained hardest, whatever he carried remained dry for a handbreadth above and a handbreadth below his hand; and when his companions were coldest, it was to them as fuel with which to light their fire.

And Arthur called Bedwyr, who never shrank from any enterprise upon which Kai was bound. None was equal to him in swiftness throughout this island except Arthur and Drych Ail Kibddar. And although he was one-handed, three warriors could not shed blood faster than he on the field of battle. Another property

he had; his lance would produce a wound equal to those of nine opposing lances.

And Arthur called to Kynddelig the Guide, "Go thou upon this expedition with the chieftain." For as good a guide was he in a land which he had never seen as he was in his own.

He called Gwrhŷr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd, because he knew all tongues.

He called Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, because he never returned home without achieving the adventure of which he went in quest. He was the best of footmen and the best of knights. He was nephew to Arthur, the son of his sister, and his cousin.

And Arthur called Menw the son of Teirgwaedd, in order that if they went into a savage country, he might cast a charm and an illusion over them, so that none might see them whilst they could see every one.

They journeyed until they came to a vast open plain, wherein they saw a great castle, which was the fairest of the castles of the world. And they journeyed that day until the evening, and when they thought they were nigh to the castle, they were no nearer to it than they had been in the morning. And the second and the third day they journeyed, and even then scarcely could they reach so far. And when they came before the castle, they beheld a vast flock of sheep, which was boundless and without an end. And upon the top of a mound there was a herdsman, keeping the sheep. And a rug made of skins was upon him; and by his side was a shaggy mastiff, larger than a steed nine winters old. Never had he lost even a lamb from his flock, much less a large sheep. He let no occasion ever pass without doing some hurt and harm. All the dead trees and bushes in the plain he burnt with his breath down to the very ground.

Then said Kai, "Gwrhŷr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd, go thou and salute yonder man." "Kai," said he, "I engaged not to go further than thou thyself." "Let us go then together," answered Kai. Said Menw the son of Teirgwaedd, "Fear not to go thither, for I will cast a spell upon the dog, so that he shall injure no one." And they went up to the mound whereon the herdsman was, and they said to him, "How dost thou fare, O herdsman?" "No less fair be it to you than to me." "Truly, art thou the chief?" "There is no hurt to injure me but my own." "Whose are the sheep that thou dost keep, and to whom does yonder castle belong?" "Stupid are ye, truly! Through the whole world is it known that this is the castle of Yspaddaden Penkawr." "And who art thou?" "I am called Custennin the son of Dyfnedig, and my brother Yspaddaden Penkawr oppressed me because of my possessions. And ye also, who are ye?" "We are an embassy from Arthur, come to seek Olwen the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr." "Oh men! the mercy of Heaven be upon you, do not that for all the world. None who ever came hither on this quest has returned alive." And the herdsman rose up. And as he arose, Kilhwch gave unto him a ring of gold. And he sought to put on the ring, but it was too small for him, so he placed it in the finger of his glove. And he went home, and gave the glove to his spouse to keep. And she took the ring from the glove when it was given her, and she said, "Whence came this ring, for thou art not wont to have good fortune?" "I went," said he, "to the sea to seek for fish, and lo, I saw a corpse borne by the waves. And a fairer corpse than it did I never behold. And from its finger did I take this ring." "O man! does the sea permit its dead to wear jewels? Show me then this body." "Oh wife, him to whom this ring belonged thou shalt see here in the evening." "And who is he?" asked the woman, "Kilhwch the son of Kilydd, the son of Prince Kelyddon, by Goleuddydd the daughter of Prince Anlawdd, his mother, who is come to seek Olwen as his wife." And when she heard that, her feelings were divided between the joy that she had that her nephew, the son of her sister, was coming to her, and sorrow because she had never known any one depart alive who had come on that quest.

And they went forward to the gate of Custennin the herdsman's dwelling. And when she heard their footsteps approaching, she ran out with joy to meet them. And Kai snatched a billet out of the pile. And when she met them she sought to throw her arms about their necks. And Kai placed the log between her two hands, and she squeezed it so that it became a twisted coil. "Oh woman," said Kai, "if thou hadst squeezed me thus, none could ever again have

set their affections on me. Evil love were this." They entered into the house, and were served; and soon after they all went forth to amuse themselves. Then the woman opened a stone chest that was before the chimney-corner, and out of it arose a youth with yellow curling hair. Said Gwrhŷr, "It is a pity to hide this youth. I know that it is not his own crime that is thus visited upon him." "This is but a remnant," said the woman. "Three-and-twenty of my sons has Yspaddaden Penkawr slain, and I have no more hope of this one than of the others." Then said Kai, "Let him come and be a companion with me, and he shall not be slain unless I also am slain with him." And they ate. And the woman asked them, "Upon what errand come you here?" "We come to seek Olwen for this youth." Then said the woman, "In the name of Heaven, since no one from the castle hath yet seen you, return again whence you came." "Heaven is our witness, that we will not return until we have seen the maiden." Said Kai, "Does she ever come hither, so that she may be seen?" "She comes here every Saturday to wash her head, and in the vessel where she washes, she leaves all her rings, and she never either comes herself or sends any messengers to fetch them."

"Will she come here if she is sent to?" "Heaven knows that I will not destroy my soul, nor will I betray those that trust me; unless you will pledge me your faith that you will not harm her, I will not send to her." "We pledge it," said they. So a message was sent, and she came.

The maiden was clothed in a robe of flame-coloured silk, and about her neck was a collar of ruddy gold, on which were precious emeralds and rubies. More yellow was her head than the flower of the broom, and her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands and her fingers than the blossoms of the wood anemone amidst the spray of the meadow fountain. The eye of the trained hawk, the glance of the three-mewed falcon was not brighter than hers. Her bosom was more snowy than the breast of the white swan, her cheek was redder than the reddest roses. Whoso beheld her was filled with her love. Four white trefoils sprung up wherever she trod. And therefore was she called Olwen.

She entered the house, and sat beside Kilhwch upon the foremost bench; and as soon as he saw her he knew her. And Kilhwch said unto her, "Ah! maiden, thou art she whom I have loved; come away with me, lest they speak evil of thee and of me. Many a day have I loved thee." "I cannot do this, for I have pledged my faith to my father not to go without his counsel, for his life will last only until the time of my espousals. Whatever is, must be. But I will give thee advice if thou wilt take it. Go, ask me of my father, and that which he shall require of thee, grant it, and thou wilt obtain me; but if thou deny him anything, thou wilt not obtain me, and it will be well for thee if thou escape with thy life." "I promise all this, if occasion offer," said he.

She returned to her chamber, and they all rose up and followed her to the castle. And they slew the nine porters that were at the nine gates in silence. And they slew the nine watch-dogs without one of them barking. And they went forward to the hall.

"The greeting of Heaven and of man be unto thee, Yspaddaden Penkawr," said they. "And you, wherefore come you?" "We come to ask thy daughter Olwen, for Kilhwch the son of Kilydd, the son of Prince Kelyddon." "Where are my pages and my servants? Raise up the forks beneath my two eyebrows which have fallen over my eyes, that I may see the fashion of my son-in-law." And they did so. "Come hither to-morrow, and you shall have an answer."

They rose to go forth, and Yspaddaden Penkawr seized one of the three poisoned darts that lay beside him, and threw it after them. And Bedwyr caught it, and flung it, and pierced Yspaddaden Penkawr grievously with it through the knee. Then he said, "A cursed ungente son-in-law, truly. I shall ever walk the worse for his rudeness, and shall ever be without a cure. This poisoned iron pains me like the bite of a gadfly. Cursed be the smith who forged it, and the anvil whereon it was wrought! So sharp is it!"

That night also they took up their abode in the house of Custennin the herdsman. The next day with the dawn they arrayed themselves in haste and proceeded to the castle, and entered the

hall, and they said, "Yspaddaden Penkawr, give us thy daughter in consideration of her dower and her maiden fee, which we will pay to thee and to her two kinswomen likewise. And unless thou wilt do so, thou shalt meet with thy death on her account." Then he said, "Her four great-grandmothers, and her four great-grandsires are yet alive, it is needful that I take counsel of them." "Be it so," answered they, "we will go to meat." As they rose up, he took the second dart that was beside him, and cast it after them. And Menw the son of Gwaedd caught it, and flung it back at him, and wounded him in the centre of the breast, so that it came out at the small of his back. "A cursed ungentle son-in-law, truly," said he, "the hard iron pains me like the bite of a horse-leech. Cursed be the hearth whereon it was heated, and the smith who formed it! So sharp is it! Henceforth, whenever I go up a hill, I shall have a scant in my breath, and a pain in my chest, and I shall often loathe my food." And they went to meat.

And the third day they returned to the palace. And Yspaddaden Penkawr said to them, "Shoot not at me again unless you desire death. Where are my attendants? Lift up the forks of my eyebrows which have fallen over my eyeballs, that I may see the fashion of my son-in-law." Then they arose, and, as they did so, Yspaddaden Penkawr took the third poisoned dart and cast it at them. And Kilhwch caught it and threw it vigorously, and wounded him through the eyeball, so that the dart came out at the back of his head. "A cursed ungentle son-in-law, truly! As long as I remain alive, my eyesight will be the worse. Whenever I go against the wind, my eyes will water; and peradventure my head will burn, and I shall have a giddiness every new moon. Cursed be the fire in which it was forged. Like the bite of a mad dog is the stroke of this poisoned iron." And they went to meat.

And the next day they came again to the palace, and they said, "Shoot not at us any more, unless thou desirest such hurt, and harm, and torture as thou now hast, and even more." "Give me thy daughter, and if thou wilt not give her, thou shalt receive thy death because of her." "Where is he that seeks my daughter? Come hither where I may see thee." And they placed him a chair face to face with him.

Said Yspaddaden Penkawr, "Is it thou that seekest my daughter?" "It is I," answered Kilhwch. "I must have thy pledge that thou wilt not do towards me otherwise than is just, and when I have gotten that which I shall name, my daughter thou shalt have." "I promise thee that willingly," said Kilhwch, "name what thou wilt." "I will do so," said he.

"Seest thou yonder vast hill?" "I see it." "I require that it be rooted up, and that the grubbings be burned for manure on the face of the land, and that it be ploughed and sown in one day, and in one day that the grain ripen. And of that wheat I intend to make food and liquor fit for the wedding of thee and my daughter. And all this I require done in one day."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though this be easy for thee, there is yet that which will not be so. No husbandman can till or prepare this land, so wild is it, except Amaethon the son of Don, and he will not come with thee by his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Govannon the son of Don to come to the headland to rid the iron, he will do no work of his own good will except for a lawful king, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get; the two dun oxen of Gwlwyd, both yoked together, to plough the wild land yonder stoutly. He will not give them of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get; the yellow and the brindled bull yoked together do I require."

"It will be easy for me to compass this."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get; the two horned oxen, one of which is beyond, and the other this side of the peaked mountain, yoked together in the same

plough. And these are Nynniaw and Peibaw whom God turned into oxen on account of their sins."

"It will be easy for me to compass this."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Seest thou yonder red tilled ground?"

"I see it."

"When first I met the mother of this maiden, nine bushels of flax were sown therein, and none has yet sprung up, neither white nor black; and I have the measure by me still. I require to have the flax to sow in the new land yonder, that when it grows up it may make a white wimple for my daughter's head, on the day of thy wedding."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Honey that is nine times sweeter than the honey of the virgin swarm, without scum and bees, do I require to make bragget for the feast."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"The vessel of Llwyrr the son of Llwyrryon, which is of the utmost value. There is no other vessel in the world that can hold this drink. Of his free will thou wilt not get it, and thou canst not compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The basket of Gwyddneu Garanhir, if the whole world should come together, thrice nine men at a time, the meat that each of them desired would be found within it. I require to eat therefrom on the night that my daughter becomes thy bride. He will give it to no one of his own free will, and thou canst not compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The horn of Gwlgawd Gododin to serve us with liquor that night. He will not give it of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The harp of Teirtu to play to us that night. When a man desires that it should play, it does so of itself, and when he desires that it should cease, it ceases. And this he will not give of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The cauldron of Diwrnach Wyddel, the steward of Odgar the son of Aedd, king of Ireland, to boil the meat for thy marriage feast."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. It is needful for me to wash my head, and shave my beard, and I require the tusk of Yskithyrwyn Penbaedd to shave myself withal, neither shall I profit by its use if it be not plucked alive out of his head."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. There is no one in the world that can pluck it out of his head except Odgar the son of Aedd, king of Ireland."

"It will be easy for me to compass this."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. I will not trust any one to keep the tusk except Gado of North Britain. Now the threescore Cantreys of North Britain are under his sway, and of his own free will he will not come out of his kingdom, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. I must spread out my hair in order to shave it, and it will never

be spread out unless I have the blood of the jet-black sorceress, the daughter of the pure white sorceress, from Pen Nant Govid, on the confines of Hell."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. I will not have the blood unless I have it warm, and no vessels will keep warm the liquid that is put therein except the bottles of Gwyddolwyd Gorr, which preserve the heat of the liquor that is put into them in the east, until they arrive at the west. And he will not give them of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Some will desire fresh milk, and it will not be possible to have fresh milk for all, unless we have the bottles of Rhinnon Rhin Barnawd, wherein no liquor ever turns sour. And he will not give them of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is not a comb or scissors with which I can arrange my hair, on account of its rankness, except the comb and scissors that are between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth, the son of Prince Tared. He will not give them of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. It will not be possible to hunt Twrch Trwyth without Drudwyn the whelp of Greid, the son of Eri."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is not a leash that can hold him, except the leash of Cwrs Cant Ewin."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is no collar that will hold the leash except the collar of Canhastyr Canllaw."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The chain of Kilydd Canhastyr to fasten the collar to the leash."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is not a huntsman who can hunt with this dog, except Mabon the son of Modron. He was taken from his mother when three nights old, and it is not known where he now is, nor whether he is living or dead."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Gwynn Mygdwn, the horse of Gwedd, that is as swift as the wave, to carry Mabon the son of Modron to hunt the boar Trwyth. He will not give him of his own free will, and thou wilt not be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Thou wilt not get Mabon, for it is not known where he is, unless thou find Eidoel, his kinsman in blood, the son of Aer. For it would be useless to seek for him. He is his cousin."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Garselit the Gwyddelian is the chief huntsman of Ireland; the Twrch Trwyth can never be hunted without him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. A leash made from the beard of Dillus Varvawc, for that is the only one that can hold those two cubs. And the leash will be of no avail unless it be plucked from his beard while he is alive, and twitched out with wooden tweezers. While he lives he will not suffer this to be done to him, and the leash will be of no use should he be dead, because it will be brittle."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is no huntsman that can hold those two whelps except Kynedyr Wyllt, the son of Hettwn Glafyrawc; he is nine times more wild than the wildest beast upon the mountains. Him wilt thou never get, neither wilt thou ever get my daughter."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. It is not possible to hunt the boar Trwyth without Gwynn the son of Nudd, whom God has placed over the brood of devils in Annwryn, lest they should destroy the present race. He will never be spared thence."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. There is not a horse in the world that can carry Gwynn to hunt the Twrch Trwyth, except Du, the horse of Mor of Oerved-dawg."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Until Gilennhin the king of France shall come, the Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted. It will be unseemly for him to leave his kingdom for thy sake, and he will never come hither."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The Twrch Trwyth can never be hunted without the son of Alun Dyved; he is well skilled in letting loose the dogs."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted unless thou get Aned and Aethlem. They are as swift as the gale of wind, and they were never let loose upon a beast that they did not kill him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get; Arthur and his companions to hunt the Twrch Trwyth. He is a mighty man, and he will not come for thee, neither wilt thou be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The Twrch Trwyth cannot be hunted unless thou get Bwlch, and Kyfwlch [and Sefwlch], the grandsons of Cleddyf Difwlch. Their three shields are three gleaming glitterers. Their three spears are three pointed piercers. Their three swords are three griding gashers, Glas, Glessic, and Clersag. Their three dogs, Call, Cuall, and Cavall. Their three horses, Hwyrdydwg, and Drwgdydwg, and Llwyrdydwg. Their three wives, Och, and Garam, and Diaspad. Their three grandchildren, Lluched, and Vyned, and Eissiwed. Their three daughters, Drwg, and Gwaeth, and Gwaethav Oil. Their three hand-maids [Eheubryd, the daughter of Kyfwlch; Gorasgwrn, the daughter of Nerth; and Gwaedan, the daughter of Kynvelyn]. These three men shall sound the horn, and all the others shall shout, so that all will think that the sky is falling to the earth."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. The sword of Gwrnach the Giant; he will never be slain except therewith. Of his own free will he will not give it, either for a price or as a gift, and thou wilt never be able to compel him."

"It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy."

"Though thou get this, there is yet that which thou wilt not get. Difficulties shalt thou meet with, and nights without sleep, in seeking this, and if thou obtain it not, neither shalt thou obtain my daughter."

"Horses shall I have, and chivalry; and my lord and kinsman Arthur will obtain for me all these things. And I shall gain thy daughter, and thou shalt lose thy life."

"Go forward. And thou shalt not be chargeable for food or raiment for my daughter while thou art seeking these things; and when thou hast compassed all these marvels, thou shalt have my daughter for thy wife."

All that day they journeyed until the evening, and then they beheld a vast castle, which was the largest in the world. And lo, a black man, huger than three of the men of this world, came out from the castle. And they spoke unto him, "Whence comest thou, O man?" "From the castle which you see yonder." "Whose castle is that?" asked they. "Stupid are ye truly, O men. There is no one in the world that does not know to whom this castle belongs. It is the castle of Gwrnach the Giant." "What treatment is there for guests and strangers that alight in that castle?" "Oh! Chieftain, Heaven protect thee. No guest ever returned thence alive, and no one may enter therein unless he brings with him his craft."

Then they proceeded towards the gate. Said Gwrhryr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd, "Is there a porter?" "There is. And thou, if thy tongue be not mute in thy head, wherefore dost thou call?" "Open the gate." "I will not open it." "Wherefore wilt thou not?" "The knife is in the meat, and the drink is in the horn, and there is revelry in the hall of Gwrnach the Giant, and except for a craftsman who brings his craft, the gate will not be opened to-night." "Verily, porter," then said Kai, "my craft bring I with me." "What is thy craft?" "The best burnisher of swords am I in the world." "I will go and tell this unto Gwrnach the Giant, and I will bring thee an answer"

So the porter went in, and Gwrnach said to him, "Hast thou any news from the gate?" "I have. There is a party at the door of the gate who desire to come in." "Didst thou inquire of them if they possessed any art?" "I did inquire," said he, "and one told me that he was well skilled in the burnishing of swords." "We have need of him then. For some time have I sought for some one to polish my sword, and could find no one. Let this man enter, since he brings with him his craft." The porter thereupon returned and opened the gate. And Kai went in by himself, and he saluted Gwrnach the Giant. And a chair was placed for him opposite to Gwrnach. And Gwrnach said to him, "Oh man! is it true that is reported of thee, that thou knowest how to burnish swords?" "I know full well how to do so," answered Kai. Then was the sword of Gwrnach brought to him. And Kai took a blue whetstone from under his arm, and asked him whether he would have it burnished white or blue. "Do with it as it seems good to thee, and as thou wouldest if it were thine own." Then Kai polished one half of the blade and put it in his hand. "Will this please thee?" asked he. "I would rather than all that is in my dominions that the whole of it were like unto this. It is a marvel to me that such a man as thou should be without a companion." "Oh! noble sir, I have a companion, albeit he is not skilled in this art." "Who may he be?" "Let the porter go forth, and I will tell him whereby he may know him. The head of his lance will leave its shaft, and draw blood from the wind, and will descend upon its shaft again." Then the gate was opened, and Bedwyr entered. And Kai said, "Bedwyr is very skilful, although he knows not this art."

And there was much discourse among those who were without, because that Kai and Bedwyr had gone in. And a young man who was with them, the only son of Custennin the herdsman, got in also. And he caused all his companions to keep close to him as he passed the three wards, and until he came into the midst of the castle. And his companions said unto the son of Custennin, "Thou hast done this! Thou art the best of all men." And thenceforth

he was called Goreu, the son of Custennin. Then they dispersed to their lodgings, that they might slay those who lodged therein, unknown to the Giant.

The sword was now polished, and Kai gave it unto the hand of Gwrnach the Giant, to see if he were pleased with his work. And the Giant said, "The work is good, I am content therewith." Said Kai, "It is thy scabbard that hath rusted thy sword, give it to me that I may take out the wooden sides of it and put in new ones." And he took the scabbard from him, and the sword in the other hand. And he came and stood over against the Giant, as if he would have put the sword into the scabbard; and with it he struck at the head of the Giant, and cut off his head at one blow. Then they despoiled the castle, and took from it what goods and jewels they would. And again on the same day, at the beginning of the year, they came to Arthur's Court, bearing with them the sword of Gwrnach the Giant.

Now, when they told Arthur how they had sped, Arthur said, "Which of these marvels will it be best for us to seek first?" "It will be best," said they, "to seek Mabon the son of Modron; and he will not be found unless we first find Eidoel the son of Aer, his kinsman." Then Arthur rose up, and the warriors of the Islands of Britain with him, to seek for Eidoel; and they proceeded until they came before the Castle of Glivi, where Eidoel was imprisoned. Glivi stood on the summit of his castle, and he said, "Arthur, what requirdest thou of me, since nothing remains to me in this fortress, and I have neither joy nor pleasure in it; neither wheat nor oats? Seek not therefore to do me harm." Said Arthur, "Not to injure thee came I hither, but to seek for the prisoner that is with thee." "I will give thee my prisoner, though I had not thought to give him up to any one; and therewith shalt thou have my support and my aid."

His followers said unto Arthur, "Lord, go thou home, thou canst not proceed with thy host in quest of such small adventures as these." Then said Arthur, "It were well for thee, Gwrhryr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd, to go upon this quest, for thou knowest all languages, and art familiar with those of the birds and the beasts. Thou, Eidoel, oughtest likewise to go with my men in search of thy cousin. And as for you, Kai and Bedwyr, I have hope of whatever adventure ye are in quest of, that ye will achieve it. Achieve ye this adventure for me."

They went forward until they came to the Ousel of Cilgwri. And Gwrhryr adjured her for the sake of Heaven, saying, "Tell me if thou knowest aught of Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken when three nights old from between his mother and the wall." And the Ousel answered, "When I first came here, there was a smith's anvil in this place, and I was then a young bird; and from that time no work has been done upon it, save the pecking of my beak every evening, and now there is not so much as the size of a nut remaining thereof; yet the vengeance of Heaven be upon me, if during all that time I have ever heard of the man for whom you inquire. Nevertheless I will do that which is right, and that which it is fitting that I should do for an embassy from Arthur. There is a race of animals who were formed before me, and I will be your guide to them."

So they proceeded to the place where was the Stag of Redynvire. "Stag of Redynvire, behold we are come to thee, an embassy from Arthur, for we have not heard of any animal older than thou. Say, knowest thou aught of Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken from his mother when three nights old?" The Stag said, "When first I came hither, there was a plain all around me, without any trees save one oak sapling, which grew up to be an oak with an hundred branches. And that oak has since perished, so that now nothing remains of it but the withered stump; and from that day to this I have been here, yet have I never heard of the man for whom you inquire. Nevertheless, being an embassy from Arthur, I will be your guide to the place where there is an animal which was formed before I was."

So they proceeded to the place where was the Owl of Cwm Cawlwyd. "Owl of Cwm Cawlwyd, here is an embassy from Arthur; knowest thou aught of Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken after three nights from his mother?" "If I knew I would tell you. When first I came hither, the wide valley you see was a wooded glen. And a race of men came and rooted it up. And

there grew there a second wood; and this wood is the third. My wings, are they not withered stumps? Yet all this time, even until to-day, I have never heard of the man for whom you inquire. Nevertheless, I will be the guide of Arthur's embassy until you come to the place where is the oldest animal in this world, and the one that has travelled most, the Eagle of Gwern Abwy."

Gwrhŷr said, "Eagle of Gwern Abwy, we have come to thee an embassy from Arthur, to ask thee if thou knowest aught of Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken from his mother when he was three nights old." The Eagle said, "I have been here for a great space of time, and when I first came hither there was a rock here, from the top of which I pecked at the stars every evening; and now it is not so much as a span high. From that day to this I have been here, and I have never heard of the man for whom you inquire, except once when I went in search of food as far as Llyn Llyw. And when I came there, I struck my talons into a salmon, thinking he would serve me as food for a long time. But he drew me into the deep, and I was scarcely able to escape from him. After that I went with my whole kindred to attack him, and to try to destroy him, but he sent messengers, and made peace with me; and came and besought me to take fifty fish spears out of his back. Unless he know something of him whom you seek, I cannot tell who may. However, I will guide you to the place where he is."

So they went thither; and the Eagle said, "Salmon of Llyn Llyw, I have come to thee with an embassy from Arthur, to ask thee if thou knowest aught concerning Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken away at three nights old from his mother." "As much as I know I will tell thee. With every tide I go along the river upwards, until I come near to the walls of Gloucester, and there have I found such wrong as I never found elsewhere; and to the end that ye may give credence thereto, let one of you go thither upon each of my two shoulders." So Kai and Gwrhŷr Gwalstawt leithoedd went upon the two shoulders of the salmon, and they proceeded until they came unto the wall of the prison, and they heard a great wailing and lamenting from the dungeon. Said Gwrhŷr, "Who is it that laments in this house of stone?" "Alas, there is reason enough for whoever is here to lament. It is Mabon the son of Modron who is here imprisoned; and no imprisonment was ever so grievous as mine, neither that of Llud Llaw Ereint, nor that of Greid the son of Eri." "Hast thou hope of being released for gold or for silver, or for any gifts of wealth, or through battle and fighting?" "By fighting will whatever I may gain be obtained."

Then they went thence, and returned to Arthur, and they told him where Mabon the son of Modron was imprisoned. And Arthur summoned the warriors of the Island, and they journeyed as far as Gloucester, to the place where Mabon was in prison. Kai and Bedwyr went upon the shoulders of the fish, whilst the warriors of Arthur attacked the castle. And Kai broke through the wall into the dungeon, and brought away the prisoner upon his back, whilst the fight was going on between the warriors. And Arthur returned home, and Mabon with him at liberty.

Said Arthur, "Which of the marvels will it be best for us now to seek first?" "It will be best to seek for the two cubs of Gast Rhymhi." "Is it known," asked Arthur, "where she is?" "She is in Aber Deu Cleddyf," said one. Then Arthur went to the house of Tringad, in Aber Cleddyf, and he inquired of him whether he had heard of her there. "In what form may she be?" "She is in the form of a she-wolf," said he; "and with her there are two cubs." "She has often slain my herds, and she is there below in a cave in Aber Cleddyf."

So Arthur went in his ship Prydwen by sea, and the others went by land, to hunt her. And they surrounded her and her two cubs, and God did change them again for Arthur into their own form. And the host of Arthur dispersed themselves into parties of one and two.

On a certain day, as Gwythyr the son of Greidawl was walking over a mountain, he heard a wailing and a grievous cry. And when he heard it, he sprang forward, and went towards it. And when he came there, he drew his sword, and smote off an ant-hill close to the earth, whereby it escaped being burned in the fire. And the ants said to him, "Receive from us the blessing of Heaven, and that which no man can give we will give thee." Then they

fetches the nine bushels of flax-seed which Yspaddaden Penkawr had required of Kilhwch, and they brought the full measure without lacking any, except one flax-seed, and that the lame pismire brought in before night.

As Kai and Bedwyr sat on a beacon cairn on the summit of Plinlimmon, in the highest wind that ever was in the world, they looked around them, and saw a great smoke towards the south, afar off, which did not bend with the wind. Then said Kai, "By the hand of my friend, behold, yonder is the fire of a robber!" Then they hastened towards the smoke, and they came so near to it, that they could see Dillus Varvawc scorching a wild boar. "Behold, yonder is the greatest robber that ever fled from Arthur," said Bedwyr unto Kai. "Dost thou know him?" "I do know him," answered Kai, "he is Dillus Varvawc, and no leash in the world will be able to hold Drudwyn, the cub of Greid the son of Eri, save a leash made from the beard of him thou seest yonder. And even that will be useless, unless his beard be plucked alive with wooden tweezers; for if dead, it will be brittle." "What thinkest thou that we should do concerning this?" said Bedwyr. "Let us suffer him," said Kai, "to eat as much as he will of the meat, and after that he will fall asleep." And during that time they employed themselves in making the wooden tweezers. And when Kai knew certainly that he was asleep, he made a pit under his feet, the largest in the world, and he struck him a violent blow, and squeezed him into the pit. And there they twitched out his beard completely with the wooden tweezers; and after that they slew him altogether.

And from thence they both went to Gelli Wic, in Cornwall, and took the leash made of Dillus Varvawc's beard with them, and they gave it into Arthur's hand. Then Arthur composed this Englyn—

Kai made a leash
Of Dillus son of Euri's beard.
Were he alive, thy death he'd be.

And thereupon Kai was wroth, so that the warriors of the Island could scarcely make peace between Kai and Arthur. And thenceforth, neither in Arthur's troubles, nor for the slaying of his men, would Kai come forward to his aid for ever after.

Said Arthur, "Which of the marvels is it best for us now to seek?" "It is best for us to seek Drudwyn, the cub of Greid the son of Eri."

A little while before this, Creiddylad the daughter of Lludd Llaw Ereint, and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl, were betrothed. And before she had become his bride, Gwyn ap Nudd came and carried her away by force; and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl gathered his host together, and went to fight with Gwyn ap Nudd. But Gwyn overcame him, and captured Greid the son of Eri, and Glinneu the son of Taran, and Gwrgwst Ledlwm, and Dynvarth his son. And he captured Penn the son of Nethawg, and Nwython, and Kyledyr Wylt his son. And they slew Nwython, and took out his heart, and constrained Kyledyr to eat the heart of his father. And therefrom Kyledyr became mad. When Arthur heard of this, he went to the North, and summoned Gwyn ap Nudd before him, and set free the nobles whom he had put in prison, and made peace between Gwyn ap Nudd and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl. And this was the peace that was made:—that the maiden should remain in her father's house, without advantage to either of them, and that Gwyn ap Nudd and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl should fight for her every first of May, from thenceforth until the day of doom, and that whichever of them should then be conqueror should have the maiden.

And when Arthur had thus reconciled these chieftains, he obtained Mygdwn, Gwedd's horse, and the leash of Cwrs Cant Ewin.

And after that Arthur went into Armorica, and with him Mabon the son of Melit, and Gware Gwallt Eurnyn, to seek the two dogs of Glythmyr Ledewic. And when he had got them, he went to the West of Ireland, in search of Gwrgi Seven; and Odgar the son of Aedd king of Ireland went with him. And thence went Arthur into the North, and captured Kyledyr Wylt; and he went after Yskithyrwyn Penbaedd. And Mabon the son of Melit came with the two dogs of Glythmyr Ledewic in his hand, and Drudwyn, the cub of Greid the son of Eri. And Arthur went himself to the chase, leading his own dog Cavall. And Kaw, of North Britain, mounted

Arthur's mare Llamrei, and was first in the attack. Then Kaw, of North Britain, wielded a mighty axe, and absolutely daring he came valiantly up to the boar, and clave his head in twain. And Kaw took away the tusk. Now the boar was not slain by the dogs that Yspaddaden had mentioned, but by Cavall, Arthur's own dog.

And after Yskithyrwyn Penbaedd was killed, Arthur and his host departed to Gelli Wic in Cornwall. And thence he sent Menw the son of Teirgwaedd to see if the precious things were between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth, since it were useless to encounter him if they were not there. Albeit it was certain where he was, for he had laid waste the third part of Ireland. And Menw went to seek for him, and he met with him in Ireland, in Esgeir Oervel. And Menw took the form of a bird; and he descended upon the top of his lair, and strove to snatch away one of the precious things from him, but he carried away nothing but one of his bristles. And the boar rose up angrily and shook himself so that some of his venom fell upon Menw, and he was never well from that day forward.

After this Arthur sent an embassy to Odgar, the son of Aedd king of Ireland, to ask for the cauldron of Diwrnach Wyddel, his purveyor. And Odgar commanded him to give it. But Diwrnach said, "Heaven is my witness, if it would avail him anything even to look at it, he should not do so." And the embassy of Arthur returned from Ireland with this denial. And Arthur set forward with a small retinue, and entered into Prydwen, his ship, and went over to Ireland. And they proceeded into the house of Diwrnach Wyddel. And the hosts of Odgar saw their strength. When they had eaten and drunk as much as they desired, Arthur demanded to have the cauldron. And he answered, "If I would have given it to any one, I would have given it at the word of Odgar king of Ireland."

When he had given them this denial, Bedwyr arose and seized hold of the cauldron, and placed it upon the back of Hygwyd, Arthur's servant, who was brother, by the mother's side, to Arthur's servant, Cachamwri. His office was always to carry Arthur's cauldron, and to place fire under it. And Llenlleawg Wyddel seized Caledvwlch, and brandished it. And they slew Diwrnach Wyddel and his company. Then came the Irish and fought with them. And when he had put them to flight, Arthur with his men went forward to the ship, carrying away the cauldron full of Irish money. And he disembarked at the house of Llwydden the son of Kelcoed, at Porth Kerddin in Dyved. And there is the measure of the cauldron.

Then Arthur summoned unto him all the warriors that were in the three Islands of Britain, and in the three Islands adjacent, and all that were in France and in Armorica, in Normandy and in the Summer Country, and all that were chosen footmen and valiant horsemen. And with all these he went into Ireland. And in Ireland there was great fear and terror concerning him. And when Arthur had landed in the country, there came unto him the saints of Ireland and besought his protection. And he granted his protection unto them, and they gave him their blessing. Then the men of Ireland came unto Arthur, and brought him provisions. And Arthur went as far as Esgeir Oervel in Ireland, to the place where the Boar Trwyth was with his seven young pigs. And the dogs were let loose upon him from all sides. That day until evening the Irish fought with him, nevertheless he laid waste the fifth part of Ireland. And on the day following the household of Arthur fought with him, and they were worsted by him, and got no advantage. And the third day Arthur himself encountered him, and he fought with him nine nights and nine days without so much as killing even one little pig. The warriors inquired of Arthur what was the origin of that swine; and he told them that he was once a king, and that God had transformed him into a swine for his sins.

Then Arthur sent Gwrhryr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd, to endeavour to speak with him. And Gwrhryr assumed the form of a bird, and alighted upon the top of the lair, where he was with the seven young pigs. And Gwrhryr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd asked him, "By him who turned you into this form, if you can speak, let some one of you, I beseech you, come and talk with Arthur." Grugyn Gwrych Ereint made answer to him. (Now his bristles were like silver wire, and whether he went through the wood or through the plain, he was to be traced by the glittering of his bristles.) And

this was the answer that Grugyn made: "By him who turned us into this form, we will not do so, and we will not speak with Arthur. That we have been transformed thus is enough for us to suffer, without your coming here to fight with us." "I will tell you. Arthur comes but to fight for the comb, and the razor, and the scissors which are between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth." Said Grugyn, "Except he first take his life, he will never have those precious things. And to-morrow morning we will rise up hence, and we will go into Arthur's country, and there will we do all the mischief that we can."

So they set forth through the sea towards Wales. And Arthur and his hosts, and his horses and his dogs, entered Prydwen, that they might encounter them without delay. Twrch Trwyth landed in Porth Cleis in Dyved, and Arthur came to Mynyw. The next day it was told to Arthur that they had gone by, and he overtook them as they were killing the cattle of Kynnwas Kwrry Vagyl, having slain all that were at Aber Gleddyf, of man and beast, before the coming of Arthur.

Now when Arthur approached, Twrch Trwyth went on as far as Preseleu, and Arthur and his hosts followed him thither, and Arthur sent men to hunt him; Eli and Trachmyr, leading Drudwyn the whelp of Greid the son of Eri, and Gwarthegydd the son of Kaw, in another quarter, with the two dogs of Glythmyr Ledewic, and Bedwyr leading Cavall, Arthur's own dog. And all the warriors ranged themselves around the Nyver. And there came there the three sons of Cleddyf Divwlch, men who had gained much fame at the slaying of Yskithyrwyn Penbaedd; and they went on from Glyn Nyver, and came to Cwm Kerwyn.

And there Twrch Trwyth made a stand, and slew four of Arthur's champions, Gwarthegydd the son of Kaw, and Tarawc of Allt Clwyd, and Rheidwn the son of Eli Atver, and Iscovan Hael. And after he had slain these men, he made a second stand in the same place. And there he slew Gwydre the son of Arthur, and Garselit Wyddel, and Grew the son of Ysgawd, and Iscawyn the son of Panon; and there he himself was wounded.

And the next morning before it was day, some of the men came up with him. And he slew Huandaw, and Gogigwr, and Penpin-gon, three attendants upon Glewlwyd Gavaelvawr, so that Heaven knows he had not an attendant remaining, excepting only Laesgevyon, a man from whom no one ever derived any good. And together with these he slew many of the men of that country, and Gwlydyn Saer, Arthur's chief Architect.

Then Arthur overtook him at Pelumyawc, and there he slew Madawc the son of Teithyon, and Gwyn the son of Tringad, the son of Neved, and Eiryawn Penllorau. Thence he went to Aberteivi, where he made another stand, and where he slew Kyflas the son of Kynan, and Gwilenhin king of France. Then he went as far as Glyn Ystu, and there the men and the dogs lost him.

Then Arthur summoned unto him Gwyn ab Nudd, and he asked him if he knew aught of Twrch Trwyth. And he said that he did not.

And all the huntsmen went to hunt the swine as far as Dyffryn Llychwr. And Grugyn Gwallt Ereint and Llwydawg Govynnyad closed with them and killed all the huntsmen, so that there escaped but one man only. And Arthur and his hosts came to the place where Grugyn and Llwydawg were. And there he let loose the whole of the dogs upon them, and with the shout and barking that was set up, Twrch Trwyth came to their assistance.

And from the time that they came across the Irish sea, Arthur had never got sight of him until then. So he set men and dogs upon him, and thereupon he started off and went to Mynydd Amanw. And there one of his young pigs was killed. Then they set upon him life for life, and Twrch Llawin was slain, and then there was slain another of the swine, Gwys was his name. After that he went on to Dyffryn Amanw, and there Banw and Bennwig were killed. Of all his pigs there went with him alive from that place none save Grugyn Gwallt Ereint and Llwydawg Govynnyad.

Thence he went on to Llwhc Ewin, and Arthur overtook him there, and he made a stand. And there he slew Echel Forddwytwll, and Garwyli the son of Gwyddawg Gwyr, and many men and dogs likewise. And thence they went to Llwhc Tawy. Grugyn Gwrych Ereint parted from them there, and went to Din Tywi. And thence he proceeded to Ceredigiawn, and Eli and Trachmyr with him,

and a multitude likewise. Then he came to Garth Gregyn, and there Llwydawg Govynnyad fought in the midst of them, and slew Rhudvyw Rhys and many others with him. Then Llwydawg went thence to Ystrad Yw, and there the men of Armorica met him, and there he slew Hirpeissawg the king of Armorica, and Llygatrudd Emys, and Gwrbothu, Arthur's uncles, his mother's brothers, and there was he himself slain.

Twrch Trwyth went from there to between Tawy and Euyas, and Arthur summoned all Cornwall and Devon unto him, to the estuary of the Severn, and he said to the warriors of this Island, "Twrch Trwyth has slain many of my men, but, by the valour of warriors, while I live he shall not go into Cornwall. And I will not follow him any longer, but I will oppose him life to life. Do ye as ye will." And he resolved that he would send a body of knights, with the dogs of the Island, as far as Euyas, who should return thence to the Severn, and that tried warriors should traverse the Island, and force him into the Severn. And Mabon the son of Modron came up with him at the Severn, upon Gwynn Mygdwn, the horse of Gwedd, and Goreu the son of Custennin, and Menw the son of Teirgwaedd; this was betwixt Llyn Lliwan and Aber Gwy. And Arthur fell upon him together with the champions of Britain. And Osla Kylllellvawr drew near, and Manawyddan the son of Llyr, and Kacmwri the servant of Arthur, and Gwyngelli, and they seized hold of him, catching him first by his feet, and plunged him in the Severn, so that it overwhelmed him. On the one side, Mabon the son of Modron spurred his steed and snatched his razor from him, and Kyledyr Wyllt came up with him on the other side, upon another steed, in the Severn, and took from him the scissors. But before they could obtain the comb, he had regained the ground with his feet, and from the moment that he reached the shore, neither dog, nor man, nor horse could overtake him until he came to Cornwall. If they had had trouble in getting the jewels from him, much more had they in seeking to save the two men from being drowned. Kacmwri, as they drew him forth, was dragged by two millstones into the deep. And as Osla Kylllellvawr was running after the boar, his knife had dropped out of the sheath, and he had lost it, and after that, the sheath became full of water, and its weight drew him down into the deep, as they were drawing him forth.

Then Arthur and his hosts proceeded until they overtook the boar in Cornwall, and the trouble which they had met with before was mere play to what they encountered in seeking the comb. But from one difficulty to another, the comb was at length obtained. And then he was hunted from Cornwall, and driven straight forward into the deep sea. And thenceforth it was never known whither he went; and Aneid and Aethlem with him. Then went Arthur to Gelli Wic, in Cornwall, to anoint himself, and to rest from his fatigues.

Said Arthur, "Is there any one of the marvels yet unobtain'd?" Said one of his men, "There is—the blood of the witch Orddu, the daughter of the witch Orwen, of Pen Nant Govid, on the confines of Hell." Arthur set forth towards the North, and came to the place where was the witch's cave. And Gwyn ab Nudd, and Gwythyr the son of Greidawl, counselled him to send Kacmwri, and Hygwyd his brother, to fight with the witch. And as they entered the cave, the witch seized upon them, and she caught Hygwyd by the hair of his head, and threw him on the floor beneath her. And Kacmwri caught her by the hair of her head, and dragged her to the earth from off Hygwyd, but she turned again upon them both, and drove them both out with kicks and with cuffs.

And Arthur was wroth at seeing his two attendants almost slain, and he sought to enter the cave; but Gwyn and Gwythyr said unto him, "It would not be fitting or seemly for us to see thee squabbling with a hag. Let Hiramreu and Hireidil go to the cave." So they went. But if great was the trouble of the first two that went, much greater was that of these two. And Heaven knows that not one of the four could move from the spot, until they placed them all upon Llamrei, Arthur's mare. And then Arthur rushed to the door of the cave, and at the door he struck at the witch, with Carnwennan his dagger, and clove her in twain, so that she fell in two parts. And Kaw, of North Britain, took the blood of the witch and kept it.

Then Kilhwch set forward, and Goreu the son of Custennin with him, and as many as wished ill to Yspaddaden Penkawr. And they took the marvels with them to his court. And Kaw of North Britain came and shaved his beard, skin, and flesh clean off to the very bone from ear to ear. "Art thou shaved, man?" said Kilhwch. "I am shaved," answered he. "Is thy daughter mine now?" "She is thine," said he, "but therefore needest thou not thank me, but Arthur who hath accomplished this for thee. By my free will thou shouldst never have had her, for with her I lose my life." Then Goreu the son of Custennin seized him by the hair of his head, and dragged him after him to the keep, and cut off his head and placed it on a stake on the citadel. Then they took possession of his castle, and of his treasures.

And that night Olwen became Kilhwch's bride, and she continued to be his wife as long as she lived. And the hosts of Arthur dispersed themselves, each man to his own country. And thus did Kilhwch obtain Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr.

THE DREAM OF RHONABWY

Madawc the son of Maredudd possessed Powys within its boundaries, from Porfoed to Gwauan in the uplands of Arwystli. And at that time he had a brother, Iorwerth the son of Maredudd, in rank not equal to himself. And Iorwerth had great sorrow and heaviness because of the honour and power that his brother enjoyed, which he shared not. And he sought his fellows and his foster-brothers, and took counsel with them what he should do in this matter. And they resolved to dispatch some of their number to go and seek a maintenance for him. Then Madawc offered him to become Master of the Household and to have horses, and arms, and honour, and to fare like as himself. But Iorwerth refused this.

And Iorwerth made an inroad into Loegria, slaying the inhabitants, and burning houses, and carrying away prisoners. And Madawc took counsel with the men of Powys, and they determined to place an hundred men in each of the three Commots of Powys to seek for him. And thus did they in the plains of Powys from Aber Ceirawc, and in Allictwn Ver, and in Rhyd Wilure, on the Vyrnwy, the three best Commots of Powys. So he was none the better, he nor his household, in Powys, nor in the plains thereof. And they spread these men over the plains as far as Nillystwn Trevan.

Now one of the men who was upon this quest was called Rhonabwy. And Rhonabwy and Kynwrig Vrychgoch, a man of Mawddwy, and Cadwgan Vras, a man of Moelvre in Kynlleith, came together to the house of Heilyn Goch the son of Cadwgan the son of Iddon. And when they came near to the house, they saw an old hall, very black and having an upright gable, whence issued a great smoke; and on entering, they found the floor full of puddles and mounds; and it was difficult to stand thereon, so slippery was it with the mire of cattle. And where the puddles were, a man might go up to his ankles in water and dirt. And there were boughs of holly spread over the floor, whereof the cattle had browsed the sprigs. When they came to the hall of the house, they beheld cells full of dust, and very gloomy, and on one side an old hag making a fire. And whenever she felt cold, she cast a lapful of chaff upon the fire, and raised such a smoke, that it was scarcely to be borne, as it rose up the nostrils. And on the other side was a yellow calf-skin on the floor; a main privilege was it to any one who should get upon that hide.

And when they had sat down, they asked the hag where were the people of the house. And the hag spoke not, but muttered. Thereupon behold the people of the house entered; a ruddy, clownish, curly-headed man, with a burthen of faggots on his back, and a pale slender woman, also carrying a bundle under her arm. And they barely welcomed the men, and kindled a fire with the boughs. And the woman cooked something, and gave them to eat, barley bread, and cheese, and milk and water.

And there arose a storm of wind and rain, so that it was hardly possible to go forth with safety. And being weary with their journey, they laid themselves down and sought to sleep. And when they looked at the couch, it seemed to be made but of a little coarse straw full of dust and vermin, with the stems of boughs sticking up there-through, for the cattle had eaten all the straw that was

placed at the head and the foot. And upon it was stretched an old russet-coloured rug, threadbare and ragged; and a coarse sheet, full of slits, was upon the rug, and an ill-stuffed pillow, and a worn-out cover upon the sheet. And after much suffering from the vermin, and from the discomfort of their couch, a heavy sleep fell on Rhonabwy's companions. But Rhonabwy, not being able either to sleep or to rest, thought he should suffer less if he went to lie upon the yellow calf-skin that was stretched out on the floor. And there he slept.

As soon as sleep had come upon his eyes, it seemed to him that he was journeying with his companions across the plain of Argynroeg, and he thought that he went towards Rhyd y Groes on the Severn. As he journeyed, he heard a mighty noise, the like whereof he never before; and looking behind him, he beheld a youth with yellow curling hair, and with his beard newly trimmed, mounted on a chestnut horse, whereof the legs were grey from the top of the forelegs, and from the bend of the hindlegs downwards. And the rider wore a coat of yellow satin sewn with green silk, and on his thigh was a gold-hilted sword, with a scabbard of new leather of Cordova, belted with the skin of the deer, and clasped with gold. And over this was a scarf of yellow satin wrought with green silk, the borders whereof were likewise green. And the green of the caparison of the horse, and of his rider, was as green as the leaves of the fir-tree, and the yellow was as yellow as the blossom of the broom. So fierce was the aspect of the knight, that fear seized upon them, and they began to flee. And the knight pursued them. And when the horse breathed forth, the men became distant from him, and when he drew in his breath, they were drawn near to him, even to the horse's chest. And when he had overtaken them, they besought his mercy. "You have it gladly," said he, "fear nought." "Ha, chieftain, since thou hast mercy upon me, tell me also who thou art," said Rhonabwy. "I will not conceal my lineage from thee, I am Iddawc the son of Mynyo, yet not by my name, but by my nickname am I best known." "And wilt thou tell us what thy nickname is?" "I will tell you; it is Iddawc Cordd Prydain." "Ha, chieftain," said Rhonabwy, "why art thou called thus?" "I will tell thee. I was one of the messengers between Arthur and Medrawd his nephew, at the battle of Camlan; and I was then a reckless youth, and through my desire for battle, I kindled strife between them, and stirred up wrath, when I was sent by Arthur the Emperor to reason with Medrawd, and to show him, that he was his foster-father and his uncle, and to seek for peace, lest the sons of the Kings of the Island of Britain, and of the nobles, should be slain. And whereas Arthur charged me with the fairest sayings he could think of, I uttered unto Medrawd the harshest I could devise. And therefore am I called Iddawc Cordd Prydain, for from this did the battle of Camlan ensue. And three nights before the end of the battle of Camlan I left them, and went to the Llech Las in North Britain to do penance. And there I remained doing penance seven years, and after that I gained pardon."

Then lo! they heard a mighty sound which was much louder than that which they had heard before, and when they looked round towards the sound, they beheld a ruddy youth, without beard or whiskers, noble of mien, and mounted on a stately courser. And from the shoulders and the front of the knees downwards the horse was bay. And upon the man was a dress of red satin wrought with yellow silk, and yellow were the borders of his scarf. And such parts of his apparel and of the trappings of his horse as were yellow, as yellow were they as the blossom of the broom, and such as were red, were as ruddy as the ruddiest blood in the world.

Then, behold the horseman overtook them, and he asked of Iddawc a share of the little men that were with him. "That which is fitting for me to grant I will grant, and thou shalt be a companion to them as I have been." And the horseman went away. "Iddawc," inquired Rhonabwy, "who was that horseman?" "Rhuwawn Pebyr the son of Prince Deorthach."

And they journeyed over the plain of Argynroeg as far as the ford of Rhyd y Groes on the Severn. And for a mile around the ford on both sides of the road, they saw tents and encampments, and there was the clamour of a mighty host. And they came to the edge of the ford, and there they beheld Arthur sitting on a flat

island below the ford, having Bedwini the Bishop on one side of him, and Gwarthegyd the son of Kaw on the other. And a tall, auburn-haired youth stood before him, with his sheathed sword in his hand, and clad in a coat and cap of jet-black satin. And his face was white as ivory, and his eyebrows black as jet, and such part of his wrist as could be seen between his glove and his sleeve, was whiter than the lily, and thicker than a warrior's ankle.

Then came Iddawc and they that were with him, and stood before Arthur and saluted him. "Heaven grant thee good," said Arthur. "And where, Iddawc, didst thou find these little men?" "I found them, lord, up yonder on the road." Then the Emperor smiled. "Lord," said Iddawc, "wherefore dost thou laugh?" "Iddawc," replied Arthur, "I laugh not; but it pitieth me that men of such stature as these should have this island in their keeping, after the men that guarded it of yore." Then said Iddawc, "Rhonabwy, dost thou see the ring with a stone set in it, that is upon the Emperor's hand?" "I see it," he answered. "It is one of the properties of that stone to enable thee to remember that thou seest here to-night, and hadst thou not seen the stone, thou wouldest never have been able to remember aught thereof."

After this they saw a troop coming towards the ford. "Iddawc," inquired Rhonabwy, "to whom does yonder troop belong?" "They are the fellows of Rhuwawn Pebyr the son of Prince Deorthach. And these men are honourably served with mead and bragget, and are freely beloved by the daughters of the kings of the Island of Britain. And this they merit, for they were ever in the front and the rear in every peril." And he saw but one hue upon the men and the horses of this troop, for they were all as red as blood. And when one of the knights rode forth from the troop, he looked like a pillar of fire glancing athwart the sky. And this troop encamped above the ford.

Then they beheld another troop coming towards the ford, and these from their horses' chests upwards were whiter than the lily, and below blacker than jet. And they saw one of these knights go before the rest, and spur his horse into the ford in such a manner that the water dashed over Arthur and the Bishop, and those holding counsel with them, so that they were as wet as if they had been drenched in the river. And as he turned the head of his horse, the youth who stood before Arthur struck the horse over the nostrils with his sheathed sword, so that, had it been with the bare blade, it would have been a marvel if the bone had not been wounded as well as the flesh. And the knight drew his sword half out of the scabbard, and asked of him, "Wherefore didst thou strike my horse? Whether was it in insult or in counsel unto me?" "Thou dost indeed lack counsel. What madness caused thee to ride so furiously as to dash the water of the ford over Arthur, and the consecrated Bishop, and their counsellors, so that they were as wet as if they had been dragged out of the river?" "As counsel then will I take it." So he turned his horse's head round towards his army.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who was yonder knight?" "The most eloquent and the wisest youth that is in this island; Adaon, the son of Taliesin." "Who was the man that struck his horse?" "A youth of froward nature; Elphin, the son of Gwyddno."

Then spake a tall and stately man, of noble and flowing speech, saying that it was a marvel that so vast a host should be assembled in so narrow a space, and that it was a still greater marvel that those should be there at that time who had promised to be by mid-day in the battle of Badon, fighting with Osla Gyllellawr. "Whether thou mayest choose to proceed or not, I will proceed." "Thou sayest well," said Arthur, "and we will go altogether." "Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who was the man who spoke so marvellously unto Arthur erewhile?" "A man who may speak as boldly as he listeth, Caradawc Vreichvras, the son of Llyr Marini, his chief counsellor and his cousin."

Then Iddawc took Rhonabwy behind him on his horse, and that mighty host moved forward, each troop in its order, towards Cevndigoll. And when they came to the middle of the ford of the Severn, Iddawc turned his horse's head, and Rhonabwy looked along the valley of the Severn. And he beheld two fair troops coming towards the ford. One troop there came of brilliant white, whereof every one of the men had a scarf of white satin with jet-black borders. And the knees and the tops of the shoulders of their horses were jet-black, though they were of a pure white in

every other part. And their banners were pure white, with black points to them all.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who are yonder pure white troop?" "They are the men of Norway, and March the son of Meirchion is their prince. And he is cousin unto Arthur." And further on he saw a troop, whereof each man wore garments of jet-black, with borders of pure white to every scarf; and the tops of the shoulders and the knees of their horses were pure white. And their banners were jet-black with pure white at the point of each.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who are the jet-black troop yonder?" "They are the men of Denmark, and Edeyrn the son of Nudd is their prince."

And when they had overtaken the host, Arthur and his army of mighty ones dismounted below Caer Badou, and he perceived that he and Iddawc journeyed the same road as Arthur. And after they had dismounted he heard a great tumult and confusion amongst the host, and such as were then at the flanks turned to the centre, and such as had been in the centre moved to the flanks. And then, behold, he saw a knight coming, clad, both he and his horse, in mail, of which the rings were whiter than the whitest lily, and the rivets redder than the ruddiest blood. And he rode amongst the host.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "will yonder host flee?" "King Arthur never fled, and if this discourse of thine were heard, thou wert a lost man. But as to the knight whom thou seest yonder, it is Kai. The fairest horseman is Kai in all Arthur's Court; and the men who are at the front of the army hasten to the rear to see Kai ride, and the men who are in the centre flee to the side, from the shock of his horse. And this is the cause of the confusion of the host."

Thereupon they heard a call made for Kadwr, Earl of Cornwall, and behold he arose with the sword of Arthur in his hand. And the similitude of two serpents was upon the sword in gold. And when the sword was drawn from its scabbard, it seemed as if two flames of fire burst forth from the jaws of the serpents, and then, so wonderful was the sword, that it was hard for any one to look upon it. And the host became still, and the tumult ceased, and the Earl returned to the tent.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who is the man who bore the sword of Arthur?" "Kadwr, the Earl of Cornwall, whose duty it is to arm the King on the days of battle and warfare."

And they heard a call made for Eirynwyth Amheibyn, Arthur's servant, a red, rough, ill-favoured man, having red whiskers with bristly hairs. And behold he came upon a tall red horse with the mane parted on each side, and he brought with him a large and beautiful sumpter pack. And the huge red youth dismounted before Arthur, and he drew a golden chair out of the pack, and a carpet of diapered satin. And he spread the carpet before Arthur, and there was an apple of ruddy gold at each corner thereof, and he placed the chair upon the carpet. And so large was the chair that three armed warriors might have sat therein. Gwenn was the name of the carpet, and it was one of its properties that whoever was upon it no one could see him, and he could see every one. And it would retain no colour but its own.

And Arthur sat within the carpet, and Owain the son of Urien was standing before him. "Owain," said Arthur, "wilt thou play chess?" "I will, Lord," said Owain. And the red youth brought the chess for Arthur and Owain; golden pieces and a board of silver. And they began to play.

And while they were thus, and when they were best amused with their game, behold they saw a white tent with a red canopy, and the figure of a jet-black serpent on the top of the tent, and red glaring venomous eyes in the head of the serpent, and a red flaming tongue. And there came a young page with yellow curling hair, and blue eyes, and a newly-springing beard, wearing a coat and a surcoat of yellow satin, and hose of thin greenish-yellow cloth upon his feet, and over his hose shoes of parti-coloured leather, fastened at the insteps with golden clasps. And he bore a heavy three-edged sword with a golden hilt, in a scabbard of black leather tipped with fine gold. And he came to the place where the Emperor and Owain were playing at chess.

And the youth saluted Owain. And Owain marvelled that the youth should salute him and should not have saluted the Emperor

Arthur. And Arthur knew what was in Owain's thought. And he said to Owain, "Marvel not that the youth salutes thee now, for he saluted me erewhile; and it is unto thee that his errand is." Then said the youth unto Owain, "Lord, is it with thy leave that the young pages and attendants of the Emperor harass and torment and worry thy Ravens? And if it be not with thy leave, cause the Emperor to forbid them." "Lord," said Owain, "thou hearest what the youth says; if it seem good to thee, forbid them from my Ravens." "Play thy game," said he. Then the youth returned to the tent.

That game did they finish, and another they began, and when they were in the midst of the game, behold, a ruddy young man with auburn curling hair and large eyes, well-grown, and having his beard new-shorn, came forth from a bright yellow tent, upon the summit of which was the figure of a bright red lion. And he was clad in a coat of yellow satin, falling as low as the small of his leg, and embroidered with threads of red silk. And on his feet were hose of fine white buckram, and buskins of black leather were over his hose, whereon were golden clasps. And in his hand a huge, heavy, three-edged sword, with a scabbard of red deer-hide, tipped with gold. And he came to the place where Arthur and Owain were playing at chess. And he saluted him. And Owain was troubled at his salutation, but Arthur minded it no more than before. And the youth said unto Owain, "Is it not against thy will that the attendants of the Emperor harass thy Ravens, killing some and worrying others? If against thy will it be, beseech him to forbid them." "Lord," said Owain, "forbid thy men, if it seem good to thee." "Play thy game," said the Emperor. And the youth returned to the tent.

And that game was ended and another begun. And as they were beginning the first move of the game, they beheld at a small distance from them a tent speckled yellow, the largest ever seen, and the figure of an eagle of gold upon it, and a precious stone on the eagle's head. And coming out of the tent, they saw a youth with thick yellow hair upon his head, fair and comely, and a scarf of blue satin upon him, and a brooch of gold in the scarf upon his right shoulder as large as a warrior's middle finger. And upon his feet were hose of fine Totness, and shoes of parti-coloured leather, clasped with gold, and the youth was of noble bearing, fair of face, with ruddy cheeks and large hawk's eyes. In the hand of the youth was a mighty lance, speckled yellow, with a newly-sharpened head; and upon the lance a banner displayed.

Fiercely angry, and with rapid pace, came the youth to the place where Arthur was playing at chess with Owain. And they perceived that he was wroth. And thereupon he saluted Owain, and told him that his Ravens had been killed, the chief part of them, and that such of them as were not slain were so wounded and bruised that not one of them could raise its wings a single fathom above the earth. "Lord," said Owain, "forbid thy men." "Play," said he, "if it please thee." Then said Owain to the youth, "Go back, and wherever thou findest the strife at the thickest, there lift up the banner, and let come what pleases Heaven."

So the youth returned back to the place where the strife bore hardest upon the Ravens, and he lifted up the banner; and as he did so they all rose up in the air, wrathful and fierce and high of spirit, clapping their wings in the wind, and shaking off the weariness that was upon them. And recovering their energy and courage, furiously and with exultation did they, with one sweep, descend upon the heads of the men, who had erewhile caused them anger and pain and damage, and they seized some by the heads and others by the eyes, and some by the ears, and others by the arms, and carried them up into the air; and in the air there was a mighty tumult with the flapping of the wings of the triumphant Ravens, and with their croaking; and there was another mighty tumult with the groaning of the men, that were being torn and wounded, and some of whom were slain.

And Arthur and Owain marvelled at the tumult as they played at chess; and, looking, they perceived a knight upon a dun-coloured horse coming towards them. And marvellous was the hue of the dun horse. Bright red was his right shoulder, and from the top of his legs to the centre of his hoof was bright yellow. Both the knight and his horse were fully equipped with heavy foreign armour. The clothing of the horse from the front opening up-

wards was of bright red sendal, and from thence opening downwards was of bright yellow sendal. A large gold-hilted one-edged sword had the youth upon his thigh, in a scabbard of light blue, and tipped with Spanish laton. The belt of the sword was of dark green leather with golden slides and a clasp of ivory upon it, and a buckle of jet-black upon the clasp. A helmet of gold was on the head of the knight, set with precious stones of great virtue, and at the top of the helmet was the image of a flame-coloured leopard with two ruby-red stones in its head, so that it was astounding for a warrior, however stout his heart, to look at the face of the leopard, much more at the face of the knight. He had in his hand a blue-shafted lance, but from the haft to the point it was stained crimson-red with the blood of the Ravens and their plumage.

The knight came to the place where Arthur and Owain were seated at chess. And they perceived that he was harassed and vexed and weary as he came towards them. And the youth saluted Arthur, and told him that the Ravens of Owain were slaying his young men and attendants. And Arthur looked at Owain and said, "Forbid thy Ravens." "Lord," answered Owain, "play thy game." And they played. And the knight returned back towards the strife, and the Ravens were not forbidden any more than before.

And when they had played awhile, they heard a mighty tumult, and a wailing of men, and a croaking of Ravens, as they carried the men in their strength into the air, and, tearing them betwixt them, let them fall piecemeal to the earth. And during the tumult they saw a knight coming towards them, on a light grey horse, and the left foreleg of the horse was jet-black to the centre of his hoof. And the knight and the horse were fully accoutred with huge heavy blue armour. And a robe of honour of yellow diapered satin was upon the knight, and the borders of the robe were blue. And the housings of the horse were jet-black, with borders of bright yellow. And on the thigh of the youth was a sword, long, and three-edged, and heavy. And the scabbard was of red cut leather, and the belt of new red deer-skin, having upon it many golden slides and a buckle of the bone of the sea-horse, the tongue of which was jet-black. A golden helmet was upon the head of the knight, wherein were set sapphire-stones of great virtue. And at the top of the helmet was the figure of a flame-coloured lion, with a fiery-red tongue, issuing above a foot from his mouth, and with venomous eyes, crimson-red, in his head. And the knight came, bearing in his hand a thick ashen lance, the head whereof, which had been newly steeped in blood, was overlaid with silver.

And the youth saluted the Emperor: "Lord," said he, "carest thou not for the slaying of thy pages, and thy young men, and the sons of the nobles of the Island of Britain, whereby it will be difficult to defend this island from henceforward for ever?" "Owain," said Arthur, "forbid thy Ravens." "Play this game, Lord," said Owain.

So they finished the game and began another; and as they were finishing that game, lo, they heard a great tumult and a clamour of armed men, and a croaking of Ravens, and a flapping of wings in the air, as they flung down the armour entire to the ground, and the men and the horses piecemeal. Then they saw coming a knight on a lofty-headed piebald horse. And the left shoulder of the horse was of bright red, and its right leg from the chest to the hollow of the hoof was pure white. And the knight and horse were equipped with arms of speckled yellow, variegated with Spanish laton. And there was a robe of honour upon him, and upon his horse, divided in two parts, white and black, and the borders of the robe of honour were of golden purple. And above the robe he wore a sword three-edged and bright, with a golden hilt. And the belt of the sword was of yellow goldwork, having a clasp upon it of the eyelid of a black sea-horse, and a tongue of yellow gold to the clasp. Upon the head of the knight was a bright helmet of yellow laton, with sparkling stones of crystal in it, and at the crest of the helmet was the figure of a griffin, with a stone of many virtues in its head. And he had an ashen spear in his hand, with a round shaft, coloured with azure blue. And the head of the spear was newly stained with blood, and was overlaid with fine silver.

Wrathfully came the knight to the place where Arthur was, and he told him that the Ravens had slain his household and the sons of the chief men of this island, and he besought him to cause

Owain to forbid his Ravens. And Arthur besought Owain to forbid them. Then Arthur took the golden chessmen that were upon the board, and crushed them until they became as dust. Then Owain ordered Gwres the son of Rheged to lower his banner. So it was lowered, and all was peace.

Then Rhonabwy inquired of Iddawc who were the first three men that came to Owain, to tell him his Ravens were being slain. Said Iddawc, "They were men who grieved that Owain should suffer loss, his fellow-chieftains and companions, Selyv the son of Kynan Garwyn of Powys, and Gwgawn Gledddyvrud, and Gwres the son of Rheged, he who bears the banner in the day of battle and strife." "Who," said Rhonabwy, "were the last three men who came to Arthur, and told him that the Ravens were slaughtering his men?" "The best of men," said Iddawc, "and the bravest, and who would grieve exceedingly that Arthur should have damage in aught; Blathaon the son of Mawrtheth, and Rhuvawn Pebyr the son of Prince Deorthach, and Hyveidd Unlenn."

And with that behold four-and-twenty knights came from Osla Gyllellvawr, to crave a truce of Arthur for a fortnight and a month. And Arthur rose and went to take counsel. And he came to where a tall, auburn, curly-headed man was a little way off, and there he assembled his counsellors. Bedwini, the Bishop, and Gwarthegydd the son of Kaw, and March the son of Meirchawn, and Caradawc Vreichvras, and Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, and Edeyrn the son of Nudd, and Rhuvawn Pebyr the son of Prince Deorthach, and Rhiogan the son of the King of Ireland, and Gwenwynwyn the son of Nav, Howel the son of Emyr Llydaw, Gwilym the son of Rhwyf Freinc, and Daned the son of Ath, and Goreu Custennin, and Mabon the son of Modron, and Peredur Paladry Hir, and Hyveidd Unlenn, and Twrch the son of Perif, and Nerth the son of Kadarn, and Gobrwyl the son of Echel Vorddwyttwl, Gwair the son of Gwestyl, and Gadwy the son of Geraint, Trystan the son of Tallwch, Moryen Manawc, Granwen the son of Llyr, and Llacheu the son of Arthur, and Llawvrodedd Varvawc, and Kadwr Earl of Cornwall, Morvran the son of Tegid, and Rhyawd the son of Morgant, and Dyvyr the son of Alun Dyved, Gwrhryr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd, Adaon the son of Taliesin, Llary the son of Kasnar Wledig, and Fflewddur Fflam, and Greidawd Galdodvydd, Gilbert the son of Kadyffro, Menw the son of Teirgwaedd, Gwrthmwl Wledig, Cawrdav the son of Caradawc Vreichvras, Gildas the son of Kaw, Kadyriaith the son of Saidi, and many of the men of Norway and Denmark, and many of the men of Greece, and a crowd of the men of the host came to that council.

"Iddawc," said Rhonabwy, "who was the auburn haired man to whom they came just now?" "Rhun the son of Maelgwn Gwynedd, a man whose prerogative it is, that he may join in counsel with all." "And wherefore did they admit into counsel with men of such dignity as are yonder a stripling so young as Kadyriaith the son of Saidi?" "Because there is not throughout Britain a man better skilled in counsel than he."

Thereupon, behold, bards came and recited verses before Arthur, and no man understood those verses but Kadyriaith only, save that they were in Arthur's praise.

And lo, there came four-and-twenty asses with their burdens of gold and of silver, and a tired way-worn man with each of them, bringing tribute to Arthur from the Islands of Greece. Then Kadyriaith the son of Saidi besought that a truce might be granted to Osla Gyllellvawr for the space of a fortnight and a month, and that the asses and the burdens they carried might be given to the bards, to be to them as the reward for their stay and that their verse might be recompensed during the time of the truce. And thus it was settled.

"Rhonabwy," said Iddawc, "would it not be wrong to forbid a youth who can give counsel so liberal as this from coming to the councils of his Lord?"

Then Kai arose, and he said, "Whosoever will follow Arthur, let him be with him to-night in Cornwall, and whosoever will not, let him be opposed to Arthur even during the truce." And through the greatness of the tumult that ensued, Rhonabwy awoke. And when he awoke he was upon the yellow calf-skin, having slept three nights and three days.

And this tale is called the Dream of Rhonabwy. And this is the reason that no one knows the dream without a book, neither

bard nor gifted seer; because of the various colours that were upon the horses, and the many wondrous colours of the arms and of the panoply, and of the precious scarfs, and of the virtue-bearing stones.

PWYLL PRINCE OF DYVED

Pwyll Prince of Dyved was lord of the seven Cantrevs of Dyved; and once upon a time he was at Narberth his chief palace, and he was minded to go and hunt, and the part of his dominions in which it pleased him to hunt was Glyn Cuch. So he set forth from Narbeth that night, and went as far as Llwyn Diarwyd. And that night he tarried there, and early on the morrow he rose and came to Glyn Cuch, when he let loose the dogs in the wood, and sounded the horn, and began the chase. And as he followed the dogs, he lost his companions; and whilst he listened to the hounds, he heard the cry of other hounds, a cry different from his own, and coming in the opposite direction.

And he beheld a glade in the wood forming a level plain, and as his dogs came to the edge of the glade, he saw a stag before the other dogs. And lo, as it reached the middle of the glade, the dogs that followed the stag overtook it and brought it down. Then looked he at the colour of the dogs, staying not to look at the stag, and of all the hounds that he had seen in the world, he had never seen any that were like unto these. For their hair was of a brilliant shining white, and their ears were red; and as the whiteness of their bodies shone, so did the redness of their ears glisten. And he came towards the dogs, and drove away those that had brought down the stag, and set his own dogs upon it.

And as he was setting on his dogs he saw a horseman coming towards him upon a large light-grey steed, with a hunting horn round his neck, and clad in garments of grey woollen in the fashion of a hunting garb. And the horseman drew near and spoke unto him thus. "Chieftain," said he, "I know who thou art, and I greet thee not." "Peradventure," said Pwyll, "thou art of such dignity that thou shouldest not do so." "Verily," answered he, "it is not my dignity that prevents me." "What is it then, O Chieftain?" asked he. "By Heaven, it is by reason of thine own ignorance and want of courtesy." "What discourtesy, Chieftain, hast thou seen in me?" "Greater discourtesy saw I never in man," said he, "than to drive away the dogs that were killing the stag and to set upon it thine own. This was discourteous, and though I may not be revenged upon thee, yet I declare to Heaven that I will do thee more dishonour than the value of an hundred staggs." "O Chieftain," he replied, "if I have done ill I will redeem thy friendship." "How wilt thou redeem it?" "According as thy dignity may be, but I know not who thou art?" "A crowned king am I in the land whence I come." "Lord," said he, "may the day prosper with thee, and from what land comest thou?" "From Annwvyn," answered he; "Arawn, a King of Annwvyn, am I." "Lord," said he, "how may I gain thy friendship?" "After this manner mayest thou," he said. "There is a man whose dominions are opposite to mine, who is ever warring against me, and he is Havgan, a King of Annwvyn, and by ridding me of this oppression, which thou canst easily do, shalt thou gain my friendship." "Gladly will I do this," said he. "Show me how I may." "I will show thee. Behold thus it is thou mayest. I will make firm friendship with thee; and this will I do. I will send thee to Annwvyn in my stead, and I will give thee the fairest lady thou didst ever behold to be thy companion, and I will put my form and semblance upon thee, so that not a page of the chamber, nor an officer, nor any other man that has always followed me shall know that it is not I. And this shall be for the space of a year from to-morrow, and then we will meet in this place." "Yes," said he; "but when I shall have been there for the space of a year, by what means shall I discover him of whom thou speakest?" "One year from this night," he answered, "is the time fixed between him and me that we should meet at the Ford; be thou there in my likeness, and with one stroke that thou givest him, he shall no longer live. And if he ask thee to give him another, give it not, how much soever he may entreat thee, for when I did so, he fought with me next day as well as ever before." "Verily," said Pwyll, "what shall I do concerning my kingdom?" Said Arawn, "I will cause that no one in all thy dominions, neither man

nor woman, shall know that I am not thou, and I will go there in thy stead." "Gladly then," said Pwyll, "will I set forward." "Clear shall be thy path, and nothing shall detain thee, until thou come into my dominions, and I myself will be thy guide!"

So he conducted him until he came in sight of the palace and its dwellings. "Behold," said he, "the Court and the kingdom in thy power. Enter the Court, there is no one there who will know thee, and when thou seest what service is done there, thou wilt know the customs of the Court."

So he went forward to the Court, and when he came there, he beheld sleeping-rooms, and halls, and chambers, and the most beautiful buildings ever seen. And he went into the hall to disarray, and there came youths and pages and disarrayed him, and all as they entered saluted him. And two knights came and drew his hunting-dress from about him, and clothed him in a vesture of silk and gold. And the hall was prepared, and behold he saw the household and the host enter in, and the host was the most comely and the best equipped that he had ever seen. And with them came in likewise the Queen, who was the fairest woman that he had ever yet beheld. And she had on a yellow robe of shining satin; and they washed and went to the table, and sat, the Queen upon one side of him, and one who seemed to be an Earl on the other side.

And he began to speak with the Queen, and he thought, from her speech, that she was the seemliest and most noble lady of converse and of cheer that ever was. And they partook of meat, and drink, with songs and with feasting; and of all the Courts upon the earth, behold this was the best supplied with food and drink, and vessels of gold and royal jewels.

And the year he spent in hunting, and minstrelsy, and feasting, and diversions, and discourse with his companions until the night that was fixed for the conflict. And when that night came, it was remembered even by those who lived in the furthest part of his dominions, and he went to the meeting, and the nobles of the kingdom with him. And when he came to the Ford, a knight arose and spake thus. "Lords," said he, "listen well. It is between two kings that this meeting is, and between them only. Each claimeth of the other his land and territory, and do all of you stand aside and leave the fight to be between them."

Thereupon the two kings approached each other in the middle of the Ford, and encountered, and at the first thrust, the man who was in the stead of Arawn struck Havgan on the centre of the boss of his shield, so that it was cloven in twain, and his armour was broken, and Havgan himself was borne to the ground an arm's and a spear's length over the crupper of his horse, and he received a deadly blow. "O Chieftain," said Havgan, "what right hast thou to cause my death? I was not injuring thee in anything, and I know not wherefore thou wouldest slay me. But, for the love of Heaven, since thou hast begun to slay me, complete thy work." "Ah, Chieftain," he replied, "I may yet repent doing that unto thee, slay thee who may, I will not do so." "My trusty Lords," said Havgan, "bear me hence. My death has come. I shall be no more able to uphold you." "My Nobles," also said he who was in the semblance of Arawn, "take counsel and know who ought to be my subjects." "Lord," said the Nobles, "all should be, for there is no king over the whole of Annwvyn but thee." "Yes," he replied, "it is right that he who comes humbly should be received graciously, but he that doth not come with obedience, shall be compelled by the force of swords." And thereupon he received the homage of the men, and he began to conquer the country; and the next day by noon the two kingdoms were in his power. And thereupon he went to keep his tryst, and came to Glyn Cuch.

And when he came there, the King of Annwvyn was there to meet him, and each of them was rejoiced to see the other. "Verily," said Arawn, "may Heaven reward thee for thy friendship towards me. I have heard of it. When thou comest thyself to thy dominions," said he, "thou wilt see that which I have done for thee." "Whatever thou hast done for me, may Heaven repay it thee."

Then Arawn gave to Pwyll Prince of Dyved his proper form and semblance, and he himself took his own; and Arawn set forth towards the Court of Annwvyn; and he was rejoiced when he beheld his hosts, and his household, whom he had not seen so long; but

they had not known of his absence, and wondered no more at his coming than usual. And that day was spent in joy and merriment; and he sat and conversed with his wife and his nobles. And when it was time for them rather to sleep than to carouse, they went to rest.

Pwyll Prince of Dyved came likewise to his country and dominions, and began to inquire of the nobles of the land, how his rule had been during the past year, compared with what it had been before. "Lord," said they, "thy wisdom was never so great, and thou wast never so kind or so free in bestowing thy gifts, and thy justice was never more worthily seen than in this year." "By Heaven," said he, "for all the good you have enjoyed, you should thank him who hath been with you; for behold, thus hath this matter been." And thereupon Pwyll related the whole unto them. "Verily, Lord," said they, "render thanks unto Heaven that thou hast such a fellowship, and withhold not from us the rule which we have enjoyed for this year past." "I take Heaven to witness that I will not withhold it," answered Pwyll.

And thenceforth they made strong the friendship that was between them, and each sent unto the other horses, and greyhounds, and hawks, and all such jewels as they thought would be pleasing to each other. And by reason of his having dwelt that year in Annwryn, and having ruled there so prosperously, and united the two kingdoms in one day by his valour and prowess, he lost the name of Pwyll Prince of Dyved, and was called Pwyll Chief of Annwryn from that time forward.

Once upon a time, Pwyll was at Narberth his chief palace, where a feast had been prepared for him, and with him was a great host of men. And after the first meal, Pwyll arose to walk, and he went to the top of a mound that was above the palace, and was called Gorsedd Arberth. "Lord," said one of the Court, "it is peculiar to the mound that whosoever sits upon it cannot go thence, without either receiving wounds or blows, or else seeing a wonder." "I fear not to receive wounds and blows in the midst of such a host as this, but as to the wonder, gladly would I see it. I will go therefore and sit upon the mound."

And upon the mound he sat. And while he sat there, they saw a lady, on a pure white horse of large size, with a garment of shining gold around her, coming along the highway that led from the mound; and the horse seemed to move at a slow and even pace, and to be coming up towards the mound. "My men," said Pwyll, "is there any among you who knows yonder lady?" "There is not, Lord," said they. "Go one of you and meet her, that we may know who she is." And one of them arose, and as he came upon the road to meet her, she passed by, and he followed as fast as he could, being on foot; and the greater was his speed, the further was she from him. And when he saw that it profited him nothing to follow her, he returned to Pwyll, and said unto him, "Lord, it is idle for any one in the world to follow her on foot." "Verily," said Pwyll, "go unto the palace, and take the fleetest horse that thou seest, and go after her."

And he took a horse and went forward. And he came to an open level plain, and put spurs to his horse; and the more he urged his horse, the further was she from him. Yet she held the same pace as at first. And his horse began to fail; and when his horse's feet failed him, he returned to the place where Pwyll was. "Lord," said he, "it will avail nothing for any one to follow yonder lady. I know of no horse in these realms swifter than this, and it availed me not to pursue her." "Of a truth," said Pwyll, "there must be some illusion here. Let us go towards the palace." So to the palace they went, and they spent that day. And the next day they arose, and that also they spent until it was time to go to meat. And after the first meal, "Verily," said Pwyll, "we will go the same party as yesterday to the top of the mound. And do thou," said he to one of his young men, "take the swiftest horse that thou knowest in the field." And thus did the young man. And they went towards the mound, taking the horse with them. And as they were sitting down they beheld the lady on the same horse, and in the same apparel, coming along the same road. "Behold," said Pwyll, "here is the lady of yesterday. Make ready, youth, to learn who she is." "My lord," said he, "that will I gladly do." And thereupon the lady came opposite to them. So the youth mounted his horse; and before he had settled himself in his saddle, she passed by, and

there was a clear space between them. But her speed was no greater than it had been the day before. Then he put his horse into an amble, and thought that notwithstanding the gentle pace at which his horse went, he should soon overtake her. But this availed him not; so he gave his horse the reins. And still he came no nearer to her than when he went at a foot's pace. And the more he urged his horse, the further was she from him. Yet she rode not faster than before. When he saw that it availed not to follow her, he returned to the place where Pwyll was. "Lord," said he, "the horse can no more than thou hast seen." "I see indeed that it avails not that any one should follow her. And by Heaven," said he, "she must needs have an errand to some one in this plain, if her haste would allow her to declare it. Let us go back to the palace." And to the palace they went, and they spent that night in songs and feasting, as it pleased them.

And the next day they amused themselves until it was time to go to meat. And when meat was ended, Pwyll said, "Where are the hosts that went yesterday and the day before to the top of the mound?" "Behold, Lord, we are here," said they. "Let us go," said he, "to the mound, to sit there. And do thou," said he to the page who tended his horse, "saddle my horse well, and hasten with him to the road, and bring also my spurs with thee." And the youth did thus. And they went and sat upon the mound; and ere they had been there but a short time, they beheld the lady coming by the same road, and in the same manner, and at the same pace. "Young man," said Pwyll, "I see the lady coming; give me my horse." And no sooner had he mounted his horse than she passed him. And he turned after her and followed her. And he let his horse go bounding playfully, and thought that at the second step or the third he should come up with her. But he came no nearer to her than at first. Then he urged his horse to his utmost speed, yet he found that it availed nothing to follow her. Then said Pwyll, "O maiden, for the sake of him whom thou best lovest, stay for me." "I will stay gladly," said she, "and it were better for thy horse hadst thou asked it long since." So the maiden stopped, and she threw back that part of her headdress which covered her face. And she fixed her eyes upon him, and began to talk with him. "Lady," asked he, "whence comest thou, and whereunto dost thou journey?" "I journey on mine own errand," said she, "and right glad am I to see thee." "My greeting be unto thee," said he. Then he thought that the beauty of all the maidens, and all the ladies that he had ever seen, was as nothing compared to her beauty. "Lady," he said, "wilt thou tell me aught concerning thy purpose?" "I will tell thee," said she. "My chief quest was to seek thee." "Behold," said Pwyll, "this is to me the most pleasing quest on which thou couldst have come; and wilt thou tell me who thou art?" "I will tell thee, Lord," said she. "I am Rhiannon, the daughter of Heveydd Hên, and they sought to give me to a husband against my will. But no husband would I have, and that because of my love for thee, neither will I yet have one unless thou reject me. And hither have I come to hear thy answer." "By Heaven," said Pwyll, "behold this is my answer. If I might choose among all the ladies and damsels in the world, thee would I choose." "Verily," said she, "if thou art thus minded, make a pledge to meet me ere I am given to another." "The sooner I may do so, the more pleasing will it be unto me," said Pwyll, "and wheresoever thou wilt, there will I meet with thee." "I will that thou meet me this day twelvemonth at the palace of Heveydd. And I will cause a feast to be prepared, so that it be ready against thou come." "Gladly," said he, "will I keep this tryst." "Lord," said she, "remain in health, and be mindful that thou keep thy promise; and now I will go hence." So they parted, and he went back to his hosts and to them of his household. And whatsoever questions they asked him respecting the damsel, he always turned the discourse upon other matters. And when a year from that time was gone, he caused a hundred knights to equip themselves and to go with him to the palace of Heveydd Hên. And he came to the palace, and there was great joy concerning him, with much concourse of people and great rejoicing, and vast preparations for his coming. And the whole Court was placed under his orders.

And the hall was garnished and they went to meat, and thus did they sit; Heveydd Hên was on one side of Pwyll, and Rhiannon on the other. And all the rest according to their rank. And they

ate and feasted and talked one with another, and at the beginning of the carousal after the meat, there entered a tall auburn-haired youth, of royal bearing, clothed in a garment of satin. And when he came into the hall, he saluted Pwyll and his companions. "The greeting of Heaven be unto thee, my soul," said Pwyll, "come thou and sit down." "Nay," said he, "a suitor am I, and I will do mine errand." "Do so willingly," said Pwyll. "Lord," said he, "my errand is unto thee, and it is to crave a boon of thee that I come." "What boon soever thou mayest ask of me, as far as I am able, thou shalt have." "Ah," said Rhiannon, "wherefore didst thou give that answer?" "Has he not given it before the presence of these nobles?" asked the youth. "My soul," said Pwyll, "what is the boon thou askest?" "The lady whom best I love is to be thy bride this night; I come to ask her of thee, with the feast and the banquet that are in this place." And Pwyll was silent because of the answer which he had given. "Be silent as long as thou wilt," said Rhiannon. "Never did man make worse use of his wits than thou hast done." "Lady," said he, "I knew not who he was." "Behold this is the man to whom they would have given me against my will," said she. "And he is Gwawl the son of Clud, a man of great power and wealth, and because of the word thou hast spoken, bestow me upon him lest shame befall thee." "Lady," said he, "I understand not thine answer. Never can I do as thou sayest." "Bestow me upon him," said she, "and I will cause that I shall never be his." "By what means wilt that be?" asked Pwyll. "In thy hand will I give thee a small bag," said she. "See that thou keep it well, and he will ask of thee the banquet, and the feast, and the preparations which are not in thy power. Unto the hosts and the household will I give the feast. And such will be thy answer respecting this. And as concerns myself, I will engage to become his bride this night twelvemonth. And at the end of the year be thou here," said she, "and bring this bag with thee, and let thy hundred knights be in the orchard up yonder. And when he is in the midst of joy and feasting, come thou in by thyself, clad in ragged garments, and holding thy bag in thy hand, and ask nothing but a bagful of food, and I will cause that if all the meat and liquor that are in these seven Cantreys were put into it, it would be no fuller than before. And after a great deal has been put therein, he will ask thee whether thy bag will ever be full. Say thou then that it never will, until a man of noble birth and of great wealth arise and press the food in the bag with both his feet, saying, 'Enough has been put therein;' and I will cause him to go and tread down the food in the bag, and when he does so, turn thou the bag, so that he shall be up over his head in it, and then slip a knot upon the thongs of the bag. Let there be also a good bugle horn about thy neck, and as soon as thou hast bound him in the bag, wind thy horn, and let it be a signal between thee and thy knights. And when they hear the sound of the horn, let them come down upon the palace." "Lord," said Gwawl, "it is meet that I have an answer to my request." "As much of that thou hast asked as it is in my power to give, thou shalt have," replied Pwyll. "My soul," said Rhiannon unto him, "as for the feast and the banquet that are here, I have bestowed them upon the men of Dyved, and the household, and the warriors that are with us. These can I not suffer to be given to any. In a year from to-night a banquet shall be prepared for thee in this palace, that I may become thy bride."

So Gwawl went forth to his possessions, and Pwyll went also back to Dyved. And they both spent that year until it was the time for the feast at the palace of Heveydd Hên. Then Gwawl the son of Clud set out to the feast that was prepared for him, and he came to the palace, and was received there with rejoicing. Pwyll, also, the Chief of Annwvyn, came to the orchard with his hundred knights, as Rhiannon had commanded him, having the bag with him. And Pwyll was clad in coarse and ragged garments, and wore large clumsy old shoes upon his feet. And when he knew that the carousal after the meat had begun, he went towards the hall, and when he came into the hall, he saluted Gwawl the son of Clud, and his company, both men and women. "Heaven prosper thee," said Gwawl, "and the greeting of Heaven be unto thee." "Lord," said he, "may Heaven reward thee, I have an errand unto thee." "Welcome be thine errand, and if thou ask of me that which is just, thou shalt have it gladly." "It is fitting," answered he. "I crave but from want, and the boon that I ask is to have this small bag that thou

seest filled with meat." "A request within reason is this," said he, "and gladly shalt thou have it. Bring him food." A great number of attendants arose and began to fill the bag, but for all that they put into it, it was no fuller than at first. "My soul," said Gwawl, "will thy bag be ever full?" "It will not, I declare to Heaven," said he, "for all that may be put into it, unless one possessed of lands, and domains, and treasure, shall arise and tread down with both his feet the food that is within the bag, and shall say, 'Enough has been put therein.'" Then said Rhiannon unto Gwawl the son of Clud, "Rise up quickly." "I will willingly arise," said he. So he rose up, and put his two feet into the bag. And Pwyll turned up the sides of the bag, so that Gwawl was over his head in it. And he shut it up quickly and slipped a knot upon the thongs, and blew his horn. And thereupon behold his household came down upon the palace. And they seized all the host that had come with Gwawl, and cast them into his own prison. And Pwyll threw off his rags, and his old shoes, and his tattered array; and as they came in, every one of Pwyll's knights struck a blow upon the bag, and asked, "What is here?" "A Badger," said they. And in this manner they played, each of them striking the bag, either with his foot or with a staff. And thus played they with the bag. Every one as he came in asked, "What game are you playing at thus?" "The game of Badger in the Bag," said they. And then was the game of Badger in the Bag first played.

"Lord," said the man in the bag, "if thou wouldst but hear me, I merit not to be slain in a bag." Said Heveydd Hên, "Lord, he speaks truth. It were fitting that thou listen to him, for he deserves not this." "Verily," said Pwyll, "I will do thy counsel concerning him." "Behold this is my counsel then," said Rhiannon; "thou art now in a position in which it behoves thee to satisfy suitors and minstrels; let him give unto them in thy stead, and take a pledge from him that he will never seek to revenge that which has been done to him. And this will be punishment enough." "I will do this gladly," said the man in the bag. "And gladly will I accept it," said Pwyll, "since it is the counsel of Heveydd and Rhiannon." "Such then is our counsel," answered they. "I accept it," said Pwyll. "Seek thyself sureties." "We will be for him," said Heveydd, "until his men be free to answer for him." And upon this he was let out of the bag, and his liegemen were liberated. "Demand now of Gwawl his sureties," said Heveydd, "we know which should be taken for him." And Heveydd numbered the sureties. Said Gwawl, "Do thou thyself draw up the covenant." "It will suffice me that it be as Rhiannon said," answered Pwyll. So unto that covenant were the sureties pledged. "Verily, Lord," said Gwawl, "I am greatly hurt, and I have many bruises. I have need to be anointed; with thy leave I will go forth. I will leave nobles in my stead, to answer for me in all that thou shalt require." "Willingly," said Pwyll, "mayest thou do thus." So Gwawl went towards his own possessions.

And the hall was set in order for Pwyll and the men of his host, and for them also of the palace, and they went to the tables and sat down. And as they had sat that time twelvemonth, so sat they that night. And they ate, and feasted, and spent the night in mirth and tranquillity. And the time came that they should sleep, and Pwyll and Rhiannon went to their chamber.

And next morning at the break of day, "My Lord," said Rhiannon, "arise and begin to give thy gifts unto the minstrels. Refuse no one to-day that may claim thy bounty." "Thus shall it be gladly," said Pwyll, "both to-day and every day while the feast shall last." So Pwyll arose, and he caused silence to be proclaimed, and desired all the suitors and the minstrels to show and to point out what gifts were to their wish and desire. And this being done, the feast went on, and he denied no one while it lasted. And when the feast was ended, Pwyll said unto Heveydd, "My Lord, with thy permission I will set out for Dyved to-morrow." "Certainly," said Heveydd, "may Heaven prosper thee. Fix also a time when Rhiannon may follow thee." "By Heaven," said Pwyll, "we will go hence together." "Willest thou this, Lord?" said Heveydd. "Yes, by Heaven," answered Pwyll.

And the next day, they set forward towards Dyved, and journeyed to the palace of Narberth, where a feast was made ready for them. And there came to them great numbers of the chief men and the most noble ladies of the land, and of these there was none to whom Rhiannon did not give some rich gift, either a bracelet, or

a ring, or a precious stone. And they ruled the land prosperously both that year and the next.

And in the third year the nobles of the land began to be sorrowful at seeing a man whom they loved so much, and who was moreover their lord and their foster-brother, without an heir. And they came to him. And the place where they met was Preseleu, in Dyved. "Lord," said they, "we know that thou art not so young as some of the men of this country, and we fear that thou mayest not have an heir of the wife whom thou hast taken. Take therefore another wife of whom thou mayest have heirs. Thou canst not always continue with us, and though thou desire to remain as thou art, we will not suffer thee." "Truly," said Pwyll, "we have not long been joined together, and many things may yet befall. Grant me a year from this time, and for the space of a year we will abide together, and after that I will do according to your wishes." So they granted it. And before the end of a year a son was born unto him. And in Narberth was he born; and on the night that he was born, women were brought to watch the mother and the boy. And the women slept, as did also Rhiannon, the mother of the boy. And the number of the women that were brought into the chamber was six. And they watched for a good portion of the night, and before midnight every one of them fell asleep, and towards break of day they awoke; and when they awoke, they looked where they had put the boy, and behold he was not there. "Oh," said one of the women, "the boy is lost?" "Yes," said another, "and it will be small vengeance if we are burnt or put to death because of the child." Said one of the women, "Is there any counsel for us in the world in this matter?" "There is," answered another, "I offer you good counsel." "What is that?" asked they. "There is here a stag-hound bitch, and she has a litter of whelps. Let us kill some of the cubs, and rub the blood on the face and hands of Rhiannon, and lay the bones before her, and assert that she herself hath devoured her son, and she alone will not be able to gainsay us six." And according to this counsel it was settled. And towards morning Rhiannon awoke, and she said, "Women, where is my son?" "Lady," said they, "ask us not concerning thy son, we have nought but the blows and the bruises we got by struggling with thee, and of a truth we never saw any woman so violent as thou, for it was of no avail to contend with thee. Hast thou not thyself devoured thy son? Claim him not therefore of us." "For pity's sake," said Rhiannon; "the Lord God knows all things. Charge me not falsely. If you tell me this from fear, I assert before Heaven that I will defend you." "Truly," said they, "we would not bring evil on ourselves for any one in the world." "For pity's sake," said Rhiannon, "you will receive no evil by telling the truth." But for all her words, whether fair or harsh, she received but the same answer from the women.

And Pwyll the chief of Annwvyn arose, and his household, and his hosts. And this occurrence could not be concealed, but the story went forth throughout the land, and all the nobles heard it. Then the nobles came to Pwyll, and besought him to put away his wife, because of the great crime which she had done. But Pwyll answered them, that they had no cause wherefore they might ask him to put away his wife, save for her having no children. "But children has she now had, therefore will I not put her away; if she has done wrong, let her do penance for it."

So Rhiannon sent for the teachers and the wise men, and as she preferred doing penance to contending with the women, she took upon her a penance. And the penance that was imposed upon her was, that she should remain in that palace of Narberth until the end of seven years, and that she should sit every day near unto a horseblock that was without the gate. And that she should relate the story to all who should come there, whom she might suppose not to know it already; and that she should offer the guests and strangers, if they would permit her, to carry them upon her back into the palace. But it rarely happened that any would permit. And thus did she spend part of the year.

Now at that time Teirnyon Twryv Vliant was Lord of Gwent Is Coed, and he was the best man in the world. And unto his house there belonged a mare, than which neither mare nor horse in the kingdom was more beautiful. And on the night of every first of May she foaled, and no one ever knew what became of the colt. And one night Teirnyon talked with his wife: "Wife,"

said he, "it is very simple of us that our mare should foal every year, and that we should have none of her colts." "What can be done in the matter?" said she. "This is the night of the first of May," said he. "The vengeance of Heaven be upon me, if I learn not what it is that takes away the colts." So he caused the mare to be brought into a house, and he armed himself, and began to watch that night. And in the beginning of the night, the mare foaled a large and beautiful colt. And it was standing up in the place. And Teirnyon rose up and looked at the size of the colt, and as he did so he heard a great tumult, and after the tumult behold a claw came through the window into the house, and it seized the colt by the mane. Then Teirnyon drew his sword, and struck off the arm at the elbow, so that portion of the arm together with the colt was in the house with him. And then did he hear a tumult and wailing, both at once. And he opened the door, and rushed out in the direction of the noise, and he could not see the cause of the tumult because of the darkness of the night, but he rushed after it and followed it. Then he remembered that he had left the door open, and he returned. And at the door behold there was an infant boy in swaddling-clothes, wrapped around in a mantle of satin. And he took up the boy, and behold he was very strong for the age that he was of.

Then he shut the door, and went into the chamber where his wife was. "Lady," said he, "art thou sleeping?" "No, lord," said she, "I was asleep, but as thou camest in I did awake." "Behold, here is a boy for thee if thou wilt," said he, "since thou hast never had one." "My lord," said she, "what adventure is this?" "It was thus," said Teirnyon; and he told her how it all befell. "Verily, lord," said she, "what sort of garments are there upon the boy?" "A mantle of satin," said he. "He is then a boy of gentle lineage," she replied. "My lord," she said, "if thou wilt, I shall have great diversion and mirth. I will call my women unto me, and tell them that I have been pregnant." "I will readily grant thee to do this," he answered. And thus did they, and they caused the boy to be baptized, and the ceremony was performed there; and the name which they gave unto him was Gwri Wallt Euryn, because what hair was upon his head was as yellow as gold. And they had the boy nursed in the Court until he was a year old. And before the year was over he could walk stoutly. And he was larger than a boy of three years old, even one of great growth and size. And the boy was nursed the second year, and then he was as large as a child six years old. And before the end of the fourth year, he would bribe the grooms to allow him to take the horses to water. "My lord," said his wife unto Teirnyon, "where is the colt which thou didst save on the night that thou didst find the boy?" "I have commanded the grooms of the horses," said he, "that they take care of him." "Would it not be well, lord," said she, "if thou wert to cause him to be broken in, and given to the boy, seeing that on the same night that thou didst find the boy, the colt was foaled and thou didst save him?" "I will not oppose thee in this matter," said Teirnyon. "I will allow thee to give him the colt." "Lord," said she, "may Heaven reward thee; I will give it him." So the horse was given to the boy. Then she went to the grooms and those who tended the horses, and commanded them to be careful of the horse, so that he might be broken in by the time that the boy could ride him.

And while these things were going forward, they heard tidings of Rhiannon and her punishment. And Teirnyon Twryv Vliant, by reason of the pity that he felt on hearing this story of Rhiannon and her punishment, inquired closely concerning it, until he had heard from many of those who came to his court. Then did Teirnyon, often lamenting the sad history, ponder within himself, and he looked steadfastly on the boy, and as he looked upon him, it seemed to him that he had never beheld so great a likeness between father and son, as between the boy and Pwyll the Chief of Annwvyn. Now the semblance of Pwyll was well known to him, for he had of yore been one of his followers. And thereupon he became grieved for the wrong that he did, in keeping with him a boy whom he knew to be the son of another man. And the first time that he was alone with his wife, he told her that it was not right that they should keep the boy with them, and suffer so excellent a lady as Rhiannon to be punished so greatly on his account, whereas the boy was the son of Pwyll the Chief of An-

nwvyn. And Teirnyon's wife agreed with him, that they should send the boy to Pwyll. "And three things, lord," said she, "shall we gain thereby. Thanks and gifts for releasing Rhiannon from her punishment; and thanks from Pwyll for nursing his son and restoring him unto him; and thirdly, if the boy is of gentle nature, he will be our foster-son, and he will do for us all the good in his power." So it was settled according to this counsel.

And no later than the next day was Teirnyon equipped, and two other knights with him. And the boy, as a fourth in their company, went with them upon the horse which Teirnyon had given him. And they journeyed towards Narberth, and it was not long before they reached that place. And as they drew near to the palace, they beheld Rhiannon sitting beside the horseblock. And when they were opposite to her, "Chieftain," said she, "go not further thus, I will bear every one of you into the palace, and this is my penance for slaying my own son and devouring him." "Oh, fair lady," said Teirnyon, "think not that I will be one to be carried upon thy back." "Neither will I," said the boy. "Truly, my soul," said Teirnyon, "we will not go." So they went forward to the palace, and there was great joy at their coming. And at the palace a feast was prepared, because Pwyll was come back from the confines of Dyved. And they went into the hall and washed, and Pwyll rejoiced to see Teirnyon. And in this order they sat. Teirnyon between Pwyll and Rhiannon, and Teirnyon's two companions on the other side of Pwyll, with the boy between them. And after meat they began to carouse and to discourse. And Teirnyon's discourse was concerning the adventure of the mare and the boy, and how he and his wife had nursed and reared the child as their own. "And behold here is thy son, lady," said Teirnyon. "And whosoever told that lie concerning thee, has done wrong. And when I heard of thy sorrow, I was troubled and grieved. And I believe that there is none of this host who will not perceive that the boy is the son of Pwyll," said Teirnyon. "There is none," said they all, "who is not certain thereof." "I declare to Heaven," said Rhiannon, "that if this be true, there is indeed an end to my trouble." "Lady," said Pendaran Dyved, "well hast thou named thy son Pryderi, and well becomes him the name of Pryderi son of Pwyll Chief of Annwryn." "Look you," said Rhiannon, "will not his own name become him better?" "What name has he?" asked Pendaran Dyved. "Gwri Wallt Euryn is the name that we gave him." "Pryderi," said Pendaran, "shall his name be." "It were more proper," said Pwyll, "that the boy should take his name from the word his mother spoke when she received the joyful tidings of him." And thus was it arranged.

"Teirnyon," said Pwyll, "Heaven reward thee that thou hast reared the boy up to this time, and, being of gentle lineage, it were fitting that he repay thee for it." "My lord," said Teirnyon, "it was my wife who nursed him, and there is no one in the world so afflicted as she at parting with him. It were well that he should bear in mind what I and my wife have done for him." "I call Heaven to witness," said Pwyll, "that while I live I will support thee and thy possessions, as long as I am able to preserve my own. And when he shall have power, he will more fitly maintain them than I. And if this counsel be pleasing unto thee, and to my nobles, it shall be that, as thou hast reared him up to the present time, I will give him to be brought up by Pendaran Dyved, from henceforth. And you shall be companions, and shall both be foster-fathers unto him." "This is good counsel," said they all. So the boy was given to Pendaran Dyved, and the nobles of the land were sent with him. And Teirnyon Twryv Vliant, and his companions, set out for his country, and his possessions, with love and gladness. And he went not without being offered the fairest jewels and the fairest horses, and the choicest dogs; but he would take none of them.

Thereupon they all remained in their own dominions. And Pryderi, the son of Pwyll the Chief of Annwryn, was brought up carefully as was fit, so that he became the fairest youth, and the most comely, and the best skilled in all good games, of any in the kingdom. And thus passed years and years, until the end of Pwyll the Chief of Annwryn's life came, and he died.

And Pryderi ruled the seven Cantrevs of Dyved prosperously, and he was beloved by his people, and by all around him. And at length he added unto them the three Cantrevs of Ystrad Tywi, and the four Cantrevs of Cardigan; and these were called the Seven

Cantrevs of Seissyllwch. And when he made this addition, Pryderi the son of Pwyll the Chief of Annwryn desired to take a wife. And the wife he chose was Kicva, the daughter of Gwynn Gohoyw, the son of Gloyw Wallt Lydan, the son of Prince Casnar, one of the nobles of this Island.

And thus ends this portion of the Mabinogion.

sectionBRANWEN THE DAUGHTER OF LLYR HERE IS THE SECOND PORTION OF THE MABINOGI

Bendigeid Vran, the son of Llyr, was the crowned king of this island, and he was exalted from the crown of London. And one afternoon he was at Harlech in Arddwy, at his Court, and he sat upon the rock of Harlech, looking over the sea. And with him were his brother Manawyddan the son of Llyr, and his brothers by the mother's side, Nissyen and Evnisssen, and many nobles likewise, as was fitting to see around a king. His two brothers by the mother's side were the sons of Eurosswydd, by his mother, Penardun, the daughter of Beli son of Manogan. And one of these youths was a good youth and of gentle nature, and would make peace between his kindred, and cause his family to be friends when their wrath was at the highest; and this one was Nissyen; but the other would cause strife between his two brothers when they were most at peace. And as they sat thus, they beheld thirteen ships coming from the south of Ireland, and making towards them, and they came with a swift motion, the wind being behind them, and they neared them rapidly. "I see ships afar," said the king, "coming swiftly towards the land. Command the men of the Court that they equip themselves, and go and learn their intent." So the men equipped themselves and went down towards them. And when they saw the ships near, certain were they that they had never seen ships better furnished. Beautiful flags of satin were upon them. And behold one of the ships outstripped the others, and they saw a shield lifted up above the side of the ship, and the point of the shield was upwards, in token of peace. And the men drew near that they might hold converse. Then they put out boats and came towards the land. And they saluted the king. Now the king could hear them from the place where he was, upon the rock above their heads. "Heaven prosper you," said he, "and be ye welcome. To whom do these ships belong, and who is the chief amongst you?" "Lord," said they, "Matholwch, king of Ireland, is here, and these ships belong to him." "Wherefore comes he?" asked the king, "and will he come to the land?" "He is a suitor unto thee, lord," said they, "and he will not land unless he have his boon." "And what may that be?" inquired the king. "He desires to ally himself with thee, lord," said they, "and he comes to ask Branwen the daughter of Llyr, that, if it seem well to thee, the Island of the Mighty may be leagued with Ireland, and both become more powerful." "Verily," said he, "let him come to land, and we will take counsel thereupon." And this answer was brought to Matholwch. "I will go willingly," said he. So he landed, and they received him joyfully; and great was the throng in the palace that night, between his hosts and those of the Court; and next day they took counsel, and they resolved to bestow Branwen upon Matholwch. Now she was one of the three chief ladies of this island, and she was the fairest damsel in the world.

And they fixed upon Aberffraw as the place where she should become his bride. And they went thence, and towards Aberffraw the hosts proceeded; Matholwch and his host in their ships; Bendigeid Vran and his host by land, until they came to Aberffraw. And at Aberffraw they began the feast and sat down. And thus sat they. The King of the Island of the Mighty and Manawyddan the son of Llyr on one side, and Matholwch on the other side, and Branwen the daughter of Llyr beside him. And they were not within a house, but under tents. No house could ever contain Bendigeid Vran. And they began the banquet and caroused and discoursed. And when it was more pleasing to them to sleep than to carouse, they went to rest, and that night Branwen became Matholwch's bride.

And next day they arose, and all they of the Court, and the officers began to equip and to range the horses and the attendants, and they ranged them in order as far as the sea.

And behold one day, Evnisssen, the quarrelsome man of whom it is spoken above, came by chance into the place, where the horses of Matholwch were, and asked whose horses they might be. "They

are the horses of Matholwch king of Ireland, who is married to Branwen, thy sister; his horses are they." "And is it thus they have done with a maiden such as she, and moreover my sister, bestowing her without my consent? They could have offered no greater insult to me than this," said he. And thereupon he rushed under the horses and cut off their lips at the teeth, and their ears close to their heads, and their tails close to their backs, and wherever he could clutch their eyelids, he cut them to the very bone, and he disfigured the horses and rendered them useless.

And they came with these tidings unto Matholwch, saying that the horses were disfigured, and injured so that not one of them could ever be of any use again. "Verily, lord," said one, "it was an insult unto thee, and as such was it meant." "Of a truth, it is a marvel to me, that if they desire to insult me, they should have given me a maiden of such high rank and so much beloved of her kindred, as they have done." "Lord," said another, "thou seest that thus it is, and there is nothing for thee to do but to go to thy ships." And thereupon towards his ships he set out.

And tidings came to Bendigeid Vran that Matholwch was quitting the Court without asking leave, and messengers were sent to inquire of him wherefore he did so. And the messengers that went were Iddic the son of Anarawd, and Heveydd Hir. And these overtook him and asked of him what he designed to do, and wherefore he went forth. "Of a truth," said he, "if I had known I had not come hither. I have been altogether insulted, no one had ever worse treatment than I have had here. But one thing surprises me above all." "What is that?" asked they. "That Branwen the daughter of Llyr, one of the three chief ladies of this island, and the daughter of the King of the Island of the Mighty, should have been given me as my bride, and that after that I should have been insulted; and I marvel that the insult was not done me before they had bestowed upon me a maiden so exalted as she." "Truly, lord, it was not the will of any that are of the Court," said they, "nor of any that are of the council, that thou shouldst have received this insult; and as thou hast been insulted, the dishonour is greater unto Bendigeid Vran than unto thee." "Verily," said he, "I think so. Nevertheless he cannot recall the insult." These men returned with that answer to the place where Bendigeid Vran was, and they told him what reply Matholwch had given them. "Truly," said he, "there are no means by which we may prevent his going away at enmity with us, that we will not take." "Well, lord," said they, "send after him another embassy." "I will do so," said he. "Arise, Manawyddan son of Llyr, and Heveydd Hir, and Unic Glew Ysgwyd, and go after him, and tell him that he shall have a sound horse for every one that has been injured. And beside that, as an atonement for the insult, he shall have a staff of silver, as large and as tall as himself, and a plate of gold of the breadth of his face. And show unto him who it was that did this, and that it was done against my will; but that he who did it is my brother, by the mother's side, and therefore it would be hard for me to put him to death. And let him come and meet me," said he, "and we will make peace in any way he may desire."

The embassy went after Matholwch, and told him all these sayings in a friendly manner, and he listened thereunto. "Men," said he, "I will take counsel." So to the council he went. And in the council they considered that if they should refuse this, they were likely to have more shame rather than to obtain so great an atonement. They resolved therefore to accept it, and they returned to the Court in peace.

Then the pavilions and the tents were set in order after the fashion of a hall; and they went to meat, and as they had sat at the beginning of the feast, so sat they there. And Matholwch and Bendigeid Vran began to discourse; and behold it seemed to Bendigeid Vran, while they talked, that Matholwch was not so cheerful as he had been before. And he thought that the chieftain might be sad, because of the smallness of the atonement which he had, for the wrong that had been done him. "Oh, man," said Bendigeid Vran, "thou dost not discourse to-night so cheerfully as thou wast wont. And if it be because of the smallness of the atonement, thou shalt add thereunto whatsoever thou mayest choose, and tomorrow I will pay thee the horses." "Lord," said he, "Heaven reward thee." "And I will enhance the atonement," said Bendigeid Vran, "for I will give unto thee a cauldron, the property of which

is, that if one of thy men be slain to-day, and be cast therein, tomorrow he will be as well as ever he was at the best, except that he will not regain his speech." And thereupon he gave him great thanks, and very joyful was he for that cause.

And the next morning they paid Matholwch the horses as long as the trained horses lasted. And then they journeyed into another commot, where they paid him with colts until the whole had been paid, and from thenceforth that commot was called Talebolion.

And a second night sat they together. "My lord," said Matholwch, "whence hadst thou the cauldron which thou hast given me?" "I had it of a man who had been in thy land," said he, "and I would not give it except to one from there." "Who was it?" asked he. "Llassar Llaesgynewid; he came here from Ireland with Kymideu Kymeinvoll, his wife, who escaped from the Iron House in Ireland, when it was made red hot around them, and fled hither. And it is a marvel to me that thou shouldst know nothing concerning the matter." "Something I do know," said he, "and as much as I know I will tell thee. One day I was hunting in Ireland, and I came to the mound at the head of the lake, which is called the Lake of the Cauldron. And I beheld a huge yellow-haired man coming from the lake with a cauldron upon his back. And he was a man of vast size, and of horrid aspect, and a woman followed after him. And if the man was tall, twice as large as he was the woman, and they came towards me and greeted me. 'Verily,' asked I, 'wherefore are you journeying?' 'Behold, this,' said he to me, 'is the cause that we journey. At the end of a month and a fortnight this woman will have a son; and the child that will be born at the end of the month and the fortnight will be a warrior fully armed.' So I took them with me and maintained them. And they were with me for a year. And that year I had them with me not grudgingly. But thenceforth was there murmuring, because that they were with me. For, from the beginning of the fourth month they had begun to make themselves hated and to be disorderly in the land; committing outrages, and molesting and harassing the nobles and ladies; and thenceforward my people rose up and besought me to part with them, and they bade me to choose between them and my dominions. And I applied to the council of my country to know what should be done concerning them; for of their own free will they would not go, neither could they be compelled against their will, through fighting. And [the people of the country] being in this strait, they caused a chamber to be made all of iron. Now when the chamber was ready, there came there every smith that was in Ireland, and every one who owned tongs and hammer. And they caused coals to be piled up as high as the top of the chamber. And they had the man, and the woman, and the children, served with plenty of meat and drink; but when it was known that they were drunk, they began to put fire to the coals about the chamber, and they blew it with bellows until the house was red hot all around them. Then was there a council held in the centre of the floor of the chamber. And the man tarried until the plates of iron were all of a white heat; and then, by reason of the great heat, the man dashed against the plates with his shoulder and struck them out, and his wife followed him; but except him and his wife none escaped thence. And then I suppose, lord," said Matholwch unto Bendigeid Vran, "that he came over unto thee." "Doubtless he came here," said he, "and gave unto me the cauldron." "In what manner didst thou receive them?" "I dispersed them through every part of my dominions, and they have become numerous and are prospering everywhere, and they fortify the places where they are with men and arms, of the best that were ever seen."

That night they continued to discourse as much as they would, and had minstrelsy and carousing, and when it was more pleasant to them to sleep than to sit longer, they went to rest. And thus was the banquet carried on with joyousness; and when it was finished, Matholwch journeyed towards Ireland, and Branwen with him, and they went from Aber Menei with thirteen ships, and came to Ireland. And in Ireland was there great joy because of their coming. And not one great man or noble lady visited Branwen unto whom she gave not either a clasp, or a ring, or a royal jewel to keep, such as it was honourable to be seen departing with. And in these things she spent that year in much renown, and she passed

her time pleasantly, enjoying honour and friendship. And in the meanwhile it chanced that she became pregnant, and in due time a son was born unto her, and the name that they gave him was Gwern the son of Matholwch, and they put the boy out to be foster-nursed, in a place where were the best men of Ireland.

And behold in the second year a tumult arose in Ireland, on account of the insult which Matholwch had received in Cambria, and the payment made him for his horses. And his foster-brothers, and such as were nearest unto him, blamed him openly for that matter. And he might have no peace by reason of the tumult until they should revenge upon him this disgrace. And the vengeance which they took was to drive away Branwen from the same chamber with him, and to make her cook for the Court; and they caused the butcher after he had cut up the meat to come to her and give her every day a blow on the ear, and such they made her punishment.

"Verily, lord," said his men to Matholwch, "forbid now the ships and the ferry boats and the coracles, that they go not into Cambria, and such as come over from Cambria hither, imprison them that they go not back for this thing to be known there." And he did so; and it was thus for not less than three years.

And Branwen reared a starling in the cover of the kneading trough, and she taught it to speak, and she taught the bird what manner of man her brother was. And she wrote a letter of her woes, and the despite with which she was treated, and she bound the letter to the root of the bird's wing, and sent it towards Britain. And the bird came to this island, and one day it found Bendigeid Vran at Caer Seiont in Arvon, conferring there, and it alighted upon his shoulder and ruffled its feathers, so that the letter was seen, and they knew that the bird had been reared in a domestic manner.

Then Bendigeid Vran took the letter and looked upon it. And when he had read the letter he grieved exceedingly at the tidings of Branwen's woes. And immediately he began sending messengers to summon the island together. And he caused sevenscore and four countries to come unto him, and he complained to them himself of the grief that his sister endured. So they took counsel. And in the council they resolved to go to Ireland, and to leave seven men as princes here, and Caradawc, the son of Bran, as the chief of them, and their seven knights. In Edeyrnion were these men left. And for this reason were the seven knights placed in the town. Now the names of these seven men were, Caradawc the son of Bran, and Heveydd Hir, and Unic Glew Ysgwyd, and Iddic the son of Anarawc Gwalltgrwn, and Fodor the son of Ervyl, and Gwlch Minascwrn, and Llassar the son of Llaesar Llaesgygywd, and Pendaran Dyved as a young page with them. And these abode as seven ministers to take charge of this island; and Caradawc the son of Bran was the chief amongst them.

Bendigeid Vran, with the host of which we spoke, sailed towards Ireland, and it was not far across the sea, and he came to shoal water. It was caused by two rivers; the Lli and the Archan were they called; and the nations covered the sea. Then he proceeded with what provisions he had on his own back, and approached the shore of Ireland.

Now the swineherds of Matholwch were upon the seashore, and they came to Matholwch. "Lord," said they, "greeting be unto thee." "Heaven protect you," said he, "have you any news?" "Lord," said they, "we have marvellous news, a wood have we seen upon the sea, in a place where we never yet saw a single tree." "This is indeed a marvel," said he; "saw you aught else?" "We saw, lord," said they, "a vast mountain beside the wood, which moved, and there was a lofty ridge on the top of the mountain, and a lake on each side of the ridge. And the wood, and the mountain, and all these things moved." "Verily," said he, "there is none who can know aught concerning this, unless it be Branwen."

Messengers then went unto Branwen. "Lady," said they, "what thinkest thou that this is?" "The men of the Island of the Mighty, who have come hither on hearing of my ill-treatment and my woes." "What is the forest that is seen upon the sea?" asked they. "The yards and the masts of ships," she answered. "Alas," said they, "what is the mountain that is seen by the side of the ships?" "Bendigeid Vran, my brother," she replied, "coming to shoal water; there is no ship that can contain him in it." "What is

the lofty ridge with the lake on each side thereof?" "On looking towards this island he is wroth, and his two eyes, one on each side of his nose, are the two lakes beside the ridge."

The warriors and the chief men of Ireland were brought together in haste, and they took counsel. "Lord," said the nobles unto Matholwch, "there is no other counsel than to retreat over the Linon (a river which is in Ireland), and to keep the river between thee and him, and to break down the bridge that is across the river, for there is a loadstone at the bottom of the river that neither ship nor vessel can pass over." So they retreated across the river, and broke down the bridge.

Bendigeid Vran came to land, and the fleet with him by the bank of the river. "Lord," said his chieftains, "knowest thou the nature of this river, that nothing can go across it, and there is no bridge over it?" "What," said they, "is thy counsel concerning a bridge?" "There is none," said he, "except that he who will be chief, let him be a bridge. I will be so," said he. And then was that saying first uttered, and it is still used as a proverb. And when he had lain down across the river, hurdles were placed upon him, and the host passed over thereby.

And as he rose up, behold the messengers of Matholwch came to him, and saluted him, and gave him greeting in the name of Matholwch, his kinsman, and showed how that of his goodwill he had merited of him nothing but good. "For Matholwch has given the kingdom of Ireland to Gwern the son of Matholwch, thy nephew and thy sister's son. And this he places before thee, as a compensation for the wrong and despite that has been done unto Branwen. And Matholwch shall be maintained wheresoever thou wilt, either here or in the Island of the Mighty." Said Bendigeid Vran, "Shall not I myself have the kingdom? Then peradventure I may take counsel concerning your message. From this time until then no other answer will you get from me." "Verily," said they, "the best message that we receive for thee, we will convey it unto thee, and do thou await our message unto him." "I will wait," answered he, "and do you return quickly."

The messengers set forth and came to Matholwch. "Lord," said they, "prepare a better message for Bendigeid Vran. He would not listen at all to the message that we bore him." "My friends," said Matholwch, "what may be your counsel?" "Lord," said they, "there is no other counsel than this alone. He was never known to be within a house, make therefore a house that will contain him and the men of the Island of the Mighty on the one side, and thyself and thy host on the other; and give over thy kingdom to his will, and do him homage. So by reason of the honour thou doest him in making him a house, whereas he never before had a house to contain him, he will make peace with thee." So the messengers went back to Bendigeid Vran, bearing him this message.

And he took counsel, and in the council it was resolved that he should accept this, and this was all done by the advice of Branwen, and lest the country should be destroyed. And this peace was made, and the house was built both vast and strong. But the Irish planned a crafty device, and the craft was that they should put brackets on each side of the hundred pillars that were in the house, and should place a leathern bag on each bracket, and an armed man in every one of them. Then Evnissyen came in before the host of the Island of the Mighty, and scanned the house with fierce and savage looks, and descried the leathern bags which were around the pillars. "What is in this bag?" asked he of one of the Irish. "Meal, good soul," said he. And Evnissyen felt about it until he came to the man's head, and he squeezed the head until he felt his fingers meet together in the brain through the bone. And he left that one and put his hand upon another, and asked what was therein. "Meal," said the Irishman. So he did the like unto every one of them, until he had not left alive, of all the two hundred men, save one only; and when he came to him, he asked what was there. "Meal, good soul," said the Irishman. And he felt about until he felt the head, and he squeezed that head as he had done the others. And, albeit he found that the head of this one was armed, he left him not until he had killed him. And then he sang an Englyn:—

"There is in this bag a different sort of meal,
The ready combatant, when the assault is made
By his fellow-warriors, prepared for battle."

Thereupon came the hosts unto the house. The men of the Island of Ireland entered the house on the one side, and the men of the Island of the Mighty on the other. And as soon as they had sat down there was concord between them; and the sovereignty was conferred upon the boy. When the peace was concluded, Bendigeid Vran called the boy unto him, and from Bendigeid Vran the boy went unto Manawyddan, and he was beloved by all that beheld him. And from Manawyddan the boy was called by Nis-syen the son of Eurosswydd, and the boy went unto him lovingly. "Wherefore," said Evnissyen, "comes not my nephew the son of my sister unto me? Though he were not king of Ireland, yet willingly would I fondle the boy." "Cheerfully let him go to thee," said Bendigeid Vran, and the boy went unto him cheerfully. "By my confession to Heaven," said Evnissyen in his heart, "unthought of by the household is the slaughter that I will this instant commit."

Then he arose and took up the boy by the feet, and before any one in the house could seize hold of him, he thrust the boy headlong into the blazing fire. And when Branwen saw her son burning in the fire, she strove to leap into the fire also, from the place where she sat between her two brothers. But Bendigeid Vran grasped her with one hand, and his shield with the other. Then they all hurried about the house, and never was there made so great a tumult by any host in one house as was made by them, as each man armed himself. Then said Morddwydtyllyon, "The gadflies of Morddwydtyllyon's Cow!" And while they all sought their arms, Bendigeid Vran supported Branwen between his shield and his shoulder.

Then the Irish kindled a fire under the cauldron of renovation, and they cast the dead bodies into the cauldron until it was full, and the next day they came forth fighting-men as good as before, except that they were not able to speak. Then when Evnissyen saw the dead bodies of the men of the Island of the Mighty nowhere resuscitated, he said in his heart, "Alas! woe is me, that I should have been the cause of bringing the men of the Island of the Mighty into so great a strait. Evil betide me if I find not a deliverance therefrom." And he cast himself among the dead bodies of the Irish, and two unshod Irishmen came to him, and, taking him to be one of the Irish, flung him into the cauldron. And he stretched himself out in the cauldron, so that he rent the cauldron into four pieces, and burst his own heart also.

In consequence of that the men of the Island of the Mighty obtained such success as they had; but they were not victorious, for only seven men of them all escaped, and Bendigeid Vran himself was wounded in the foot with a poisoned dart. Now the seven men that escaped were Pryderi, Manawyddan, Gluneu Eil Taran, Taliesin, Ynawc, Grudwen the son of Muryel, and Heilyn the son of Gwynn Hen.

And Bendigeid Vran commanded them that they should cut off his head. "And take you my head," said he, "and bear it even unto the White Mount, in London, and bury it there, with the face towards France. And a long time will you be upon the road. In Harlech you will be feasting seven years, the birds of Rhiannon singing unto you the while. And all that time the head will be to you as pleasant company as it ever was when on my body. And at Gwales in Penvro you will be fourscore years, and you may remain there, and the head with you uncorrupted, until you open the door that looks towards Aber Henvelen, and towards Cornwall. And after you have opened that door, there you may no longer tarry, set forth then to London to bury the head, and go straight forward."

So they cut off his head, and these seven went forward therewith. And Branwen was the eighth with them, and they came to land at Aber Alaw, in Talebolion, and they sat down to rest. And Branwen looked towards Ireland and towards the Island of the Mighty, to see if she could descry them. "Alas," said she, "woe is me that I was ever born; two islands have been destroyed because of me!" Then she uttered a loud groan, and there broke her heart. And they made her a four-sided grave, and buried her upon the banks of the Alaw.

Then the seven men journeyed forward towards Harlech, bearing the head with them; and as they went, behold there met them a multitude of men and of women. "Have you any tidings?" asked Manawyddan. "We have none," said they, "save that Caswallawn

the son of Beli has conquered the Island of the Mighty, and is crowned king in London." "What has become," said they, "of Caradawc the son of Bran, and the seven men who were left with him in this island?" "Caswallawn came upon them, and slew six of the men, and Caradawc's heart broke for grief thereof; for he could see the sword that slew the men, but knew not who it was that wielded it. Caswallawn had flung upon him the Veil of Illusion, so that no one could see him slay the men, but the sword only could they see. And it liked him not to slay Caradawc, because he was his nephew, the son of his cousin. And now he was the third whose heart had broke through grief. Pendaran Dyved, who had remained as a young page with these men, escaped into the wood," said they.

Then they went on to Harlech, and there stopped to rest, and they provided meat and liquor, and sat down to eat and to drink. And there came three birds, and began singing unto them a certain song, and all the songs they had ever heard were unpleasant compared thereto; and the birds seemed to them to be at a great distance from them over the sea, yet they appeared as distinct as if they were close by, and at this repast they continued seven years.

And at the close of the seventh year they went forth to Gwales in Penvro. And there they found a fair and regal spot overlooking the ocean; and a spacious hall was therein. And they went into the hall, and two of its doors were open, but the third door was closed, that which looked towards Cornwall. "See, yonder," said Manawyddan, "is the door that we may not open." And that night they regaled themselves and were joyful. And of all they had seen of food laid before them, and of all they had heard of, they remembered nothing; neither of that, nor of any sorrow whatsoever. And there they remained fourscore years, unconscious of having ever spent a time more joyous and mirthful. And they were not more weary than when first they came, neither did they, any of them, know the time they had been there. And it was not more irksome to them having the head with them, than if Bendigeid Vran had been with them himself. And because of these fourscore years, it was called "the Entertaining of the noble Head." The entertaining of Branwen and Matholwch was in the time that they went to Ireland.

One day said Heilyn the son of Gwynn, "Evil betide me, if I do not open the door to know if that is true which is said concerning it." So he opened the door and looked towards Cornwall and Aber Henvelen. And when they had looked, they were as conscious of all the evils they had ever sustained, and of all the friends and companions they had lost, and of all the misery that had befallen them, as if all had happened in that very spot; and especially of the fate of their lord. And because of their perturbation they could not rest, but journeyed forth with the head towards London. And they buried the head in the White Mount, and when it was buried, this was the third goodly concealment; and it was the third ill-fated disclosure when it was disinterred, inasmuch as no invasion from across the sea came to this island while the head was in that concealment.

And thus is the story related of those who journeyed over from Ireland.

In Ireland none were left alive, except five pregnant women in a cave in the Irish wilderness; and to these five women in the same night were born five sons, whom they nursed until they became grown-up youths. And they thought about wives, and they at the same time desired to possess them, and each took a wife of the mothers of their companions, and they governed the country and peopled it.

And these five divided it amongst them, and because of this partition are the five divisions of Ireland still so termed. And they examined the land where the battles had taken place, and they found gold and silver until they became wealthy.

And thus ends this portion of the Mabinogi, concerning the blow given to Branwen, which was the third unhappy blow of this island; and concerning the entertainment of Bran, when the hosts of sevenscore countries and ten went over to Ireland to revenge the blow given to Branwen; and concerning the seven years' banquet in Harlech, and the singing of the birds of Rhiannon, and the sojourning of the head for the space of fourscore years.

MANAWYDDAN THE SON OF LLYR HERE IS THE THIRD PORTION OF THE MABINOGI

When the seven men of whom we spoke above had buried the head of Bendigeid Vran, in the White Mount an London, with its face towards France; Manawyddan gazed upon the town of London, and upon his companions, and heaved a great sigh; and much grief and heaviness came upon him. "Alas, Almighty Heaven, woe is me," he exclaimed, "there is none save myself without a resting-place this night." "Lord," said Pryderi, "be not so sorrowful. Thy cousin is king of the Island of the Mighty, and though he should do thee wrong, thou hast never been a claimant of land or possessions. Thou art the third disinherited prince." "Yea," answered he, "but although this man is my cousin, it grieveth me to see any one in the place of my brother Bendigeid Vran, neither can I be happy in the same dwelling with him." "Wilt thou follow the counsel of another?" said Pryderi. "I stand in need of counsel," he answered, "and what may that counsel be?" "Seven Cantreys remain unto me," said Pryderi, "wherein Rhiannon my mother dwells. I will bestow her upon thee and the seven Cantreys with her, and though thou hadst no possessions but those Cantreys only, thou couldst not have seven Cantreys fairer than they. Kicva, the daughter of Gwynn Gloyw, is my wife, and since the inheritance of the Cantreys belongs to me, do thou and Rhiannon enjoy them, and if thou ever desire any possessions thou wilt take these." "I do not, Chieftain," said he; "Heaven reward thee for thy friendship." "I would show thee the best friendship in the world if thou wouldst let me." "I will, my friend," said he, "and Heaven reward thee. I will go with thee to seek Rhiannon and to look at thy possessions." "Thou wilt do well," he answered. "And I believe that thou didst never hear a lady discourse better than she, and when she was in her prime none was ever fairer. Even now her aspect is not uncomely."

They set forth, and, however long the journey, they came at length to Dyved, and a feast was prepared for them against their coming to Narberth, which Rhiannon and Kicva had provided. Then began Manawyddan and Rhiannon to sit and to talk together, and from their discourse his mind and his thoughts became warmed towards her, and he thought in his heart he had never beheld any lady more fulfilled of grace and beauty than she. "Pryderi," said he, "I will that it be as thou didst say." "What saying was that?" asked Rhiannon. "Lady," said Pryderi, "I did offer thee as a wife to Manawyddan the son of Llyr." "By that will I gladly abide," said Rhiannon. "Right glad am I also," said Manawyddan; "may Heaven reward him who hath shown unto me friendship so perfect as this."

And before the feast was over she became his bride. Said Pryderi, "Tarry ye here the rest of the feast, and I will go into Lloegyr to tender my homage unto Caswallawn the son of Beli." "Lord," said Rhiannon, "Caswallawn is in Kent, thou mayest therefore tarry at the feast, and wait until he shall be nearer." "We will wait," he answered. So they finished the feast. And they began to make the circuit of Dyved, and to hunt, and to take their pleasure. And as they went through the country, they had never seen lands more pleasant to live in, nor better hunting grounds, nor greater plenty of honey and fish. And such was the friendship between those four, that they would not be parted from each other by night nor by day.

And in the midst of all this he went to Caswallawn at Oxford, and tendered his homage; and honourable was his reception there, and highly was he praised for offering his homage.

And after his return, Pryderi and Manawyddan feasted and took their ease and pleasure. And they began a feast at Narberth, for it was the chief palace; and there originated all honour. And when they had ended the first meal that night, while those who served them ate, they arose and went forth, and proceeded all four to the Gorsedd of Narberth, and their retinue with them. And as they sat thus, behold, a peal of thunder, and with the violence of the thunderstorm, lo there came a fall of mist, so thick that not one of them could see the other. And after the mist it became light all around. And when they looked towards the place where they were wont to see cattle, and herds, and dwellings, they saw

nothing now, neither house, nor beast, nor smoke, nor fire, nor man, nor dwelling; but the houses of the Court empty, and desert, and uninhabited, without either man or beast within them. And truly all their companions were lost to them, without their knowing aught of what had befallen them, save those four only.

"In the name of Heaven," cried Manawyddan, "where are they of the Court, and all my host beside these? Let us go and see." So they came into the hall, and there was no man; and they went on to the castle and to the sleeping-place, and they saw none; and in the mead-cellar and in the kitchen there was nought but desolation. So they four feasted, and hunted, and took their pleasure. Then they began to go through the land and all the possessions that they had, and they visited the houses and dwellings, and found nothing but wild beasts. And when they had consumed their feast and all their provisions, they fed upon the prey they killed in hunting, and the honey of the wild swarms. And thus they passed the first year pleasantly, and the second; but at the last they began to be weary.

"Verily," said Manawyddan, "we must not bide thus. Let us go into Lloegyr, and seek some craft whereby we may gain our support." So they went into Lloegyr, and came as far as Hereford. And they betook themselves to making saddles. And Manawyddan began to make housings, and he gilded and coloured them with blue enamel, in the manner that he had seen it done by Lasar Llaesgywydd. And he made the blue enamel as it was made by the other man. And therefore is it still called Calch Lasar [blue enamel], because Lasar Llaesgywydd had wrought it.

And as long as that workmanship could be had of Manawyddan, neither saddle nor housing was bought of a saddler throughout all Hereford; till at length every one of the saddlers perceived that they were losing much of their gain, and that no man bought of them, but him who could not get what he sought from Manawyddan. Then they assembled together, and agreed to slay him and his companions.

Now they received warning of this, and took counsel whether they should leave the city. "By Heaven," said Pryderi, "it is not my counsel that we should quit the town, but that we should slay these boors." "Not so," said Manawyddan, "for if we fight with them, we shall have evil fame, and shall be put in prison. It were better for us to go to another town to maintain ourselves." So they four went to another city.

"What craft shall we take?" said Pryderi. "We will make shields," said Manawyddan. "Do we know anything about that craft?" said Pryderi. "We will try," answered he. There they began to make shields, and fashioned them after the shape of the good shields they had seen; and they enamelled them, as they had done the saddles. And they prospered in that place, so that not a shield was asked for in the whole town, but such as was had of them. Rapid therefore was their work, and numberless were the shields they made. But at last they were marked by the craftsmen, who came together in haste, and their fellow-townsmen with them, and agreed that they should seek to slay them. But they received warning, and heard how the men had resolved on their destruction. "Pryderi," said Manawyddan, "these men desire to slay us." "Let us not endure this from these boors, but let us rather fall upon them and slay them." "Not so," he answered; "Caswallawn and his men will hear of it, and we shall be undone. Let us go to another town." So to another town they went.

"What craft shall we take?" said Manawyddan. "Whatsoever thou wilt that we know," said Pryderi. "Not so," he replied, "but let us take to making shoes, for there is not courage enough among cordwainers either to fight with us or to molest us." "I know nothing thereof," said Pryderi. "But I know," answered Manawyddan; "and I will teach thee to stitch. We will not attempt to dress the leather, but we will buy it ready dressed and will make the shoes from it."

So he began by buying the best cordwal that could be had in the town, and none other would he buy except the leather for the soles; and he associated himself with the best goldsmith in the town, and caused him to make clasps for the shoes, and to gild the clasps, and he marked how it was done until he learnt the method. And therefore was he called one of the three makers of Gold Shoes; and, when they could be had from him, not a shoe

nor hose was bought of any of the cordwainers in the town. But when the cordwainers perceived that their gains were failing (for as Manawyddan shaped the work, so Pryderi stitched it), they came together and took counsel, and agreed that they would slay them.

"Pryderi," said Manawyddan, "these men are minded to slay us." "Wherefore should we bear this from the boorish thieves?" said Pryderi. "Rather let us slay them all." "Not so," said Manawyddan, "we will not slay them, neither will we remain in Lloegyr any longer. Let us set forth to Dyved and go to see it."

So they journeyed along until they came to Dyved, and they went forward to Narberth. And there they kindled fire and supported themselves by hunting. And thus they spent a month. And they gathered their dogs around them, and tarried there one year.

And one morning Pryderi and Manawyddan rose up to hunt, and they ranged their dogs and went forth from the palace. And some of the dogs ran before them and came to a small bush which was near at hand; but as soon as they were come to the bush, they hastily drew back and returned to the men, their hair bristling up greatly. "Let us go near to the bush," said Pryderi, "and see what is in it." And as they came near, behold, a wild boar of a pure white colour rose up from the bush. Then the dogs, being set on by the men, rushed towards him; but he left the bush and fell back a little way from the men, and made a stand against the dogs without retreating from them, until the men had come near. And when the men came up, he fell back a second time, and betook him to flight. Then they pursued the boar until they beheld a vast and lofty castle, all newly built, in a place where they had never before seen either stone or building. And the boar ran swiftly into the castle and the dogs after him. Now when the boar and the dogs had gone into the castle, they began to wonder at finding a castle in a place where they had never before seen any building whatsoever. And from the top of the Gorsedd they looked and listened for the dogs. But so long as they were there they heard not one of the dogs nor aught concerning them.

"Lord," said Pryderi, "I will go into the castle to get tidings of the dogs." "Truly," he replied, "thou wouldst be unwise to go into this castle, which thou hast never seen till now. If thou wouldst follow my counsel, thou wouldst not enter therein. Whosoever has cast a spell over this land has caused this castle to be here." "Of a truth," answered Pryderi, "I cannot thus give up my dogs." And for all the counsel that Manawyddan gave him, yet to the castle he went.

When he came within the castle, neither man nor beast, nor boar nor dogs, nor house nor dwelling saw he within it. But in the centre of the castle floor he beheld a fountain with marble work around it, and on the margin of the fountain a golden bowl upon a marble slab, and chains hanging from the air, to which he saw no end.

And he was greatly pleased with the beauty of the gold, and with the rich workmanship of the bowl, and he went up to the bowl and laid hold of it. And when he had taken hold of it his hands stuck to the bowl, and his feet to the slab on which the howl was placed, and all his joyousness forsook him, so that he could not utter a word. And thus he stood.

And Manawyddan waited for him till near the close of the day. And late in the evening, being certain that he should have no tidings of Pryderi or of the dogs, he went back to the palace. And as he entered, Rhiannon looked at him. "Where," said she, "are thy companion and thy dogs?" "Behold," he answered, "the adventure that has befallen me." And he related it all unto her. "An evil companion hast thou been," said Rhiannon, "and a good companion hast thou lost." And with that word she went out, and proceeded towards the castle according to the direction which he gave her. The gate of the castle she found open. She was nothing daunted, and she went in. And as she went in, she perceived Pryderi laying hold of the bowl, and she went towards him. "Oh, my lord," said she, "what dust thou do here?" And she took hold of the bowl with him; and as she did so her hands became fast to the bowl, and her feet to the slab, and she was not able to utter a word. And with that, as it became night, lo, there came thunder upon them, and a fall of mist, and thereupon the castle vanished, and they with it.

When Kicva the daughter of Gwynn Gloyw saw that there was no one in the palace but herself and Manawyddan, she sorrowed so that she cared not whether she lived or died. And Manawyddan saw this. "Thou art in the wrong," said he, "if through fear of me thou grievest thus. I call Heaven to witness that thou hast never seen friendship mere pure than that which I will bear thee, as long as Heaven will that thou shouldst be thus. I declare to thee that were I in the dawn of youth I would keep my faith unto Pryderi, and unto thee also will I keep it. Be there no fear upon thee, therefore," said he, "for Heaven is my witness that thou shalt meet with all the friendship thou canst wish, and that it is in my power to show thee, as long as it shall please Heaven to continue us in this grief and woe." "Heaven reward thee," she said, "and that is what I deemed of thee." And the damsel thereupon took courage and was glad.

"Truly, lady," said Manawyddan, "it is not fitting for us to stay here, we have lost our dogs, and we cannot get food. Let us go into Lloegyr; it is easiest for us to find support there." "Gladly, lord," said she, "we will do so." And they set forth together to Lloegyr.

"Lord," said she, "what craft wilt thou follow? Take up one that is seemly." "None other will I take," answered he, "save that of making shoes, as I did formerly." "Lord," said she, "such a craft becomes not a man so nobly born as thou." "By that however will I abide," said he.

So he began his craft, and he made all his work of the finest leather he could get in the town, and, as he had done at the other place, he caused gilded clasps to be made for the shoes. And except himself all the cordwainers in the town were idle, and without work. For as long as they could be had from him, neither shoes nor hose were bought elsewhere. And thus they tarried there a year, until the cordwainers became envious, and took counsel concerning him. And he had warning thereof, and it was told him how the cordwainers had agreed together to slay him.

"Lord," said Kicva, "wherefore should this be borne from these boors?" "Nay," said he, "we will go back unto Dyved." So towards Dyved they set forth.

Now Manawyddan, when he set out to return to Dyved, took with him a burden of wheat. And he proceeded towards Narberth, and there he dwelt. And never was he better pleased than when he saw Narberth again, and the lands where he had been wont to hunt with Pryderi and with Rhiannon. And he accustomed himself to fish, and to hunt the deer in their covert. And then he began to prepare some ground, and he sowed a croft, and a second, and a third. And no wheat in the world ever sprung up better. And the three crofts prospered with perfect growth, and no man ever saw fairer wheat than it.

And thus passed the seasons of the year until the harvest came. And he went to look at one of his crofts, and behold it was ripe. "I will reap this to-morrow," said he. And that night he went back to Narberth, and on the morrow in the grey dawn he went to reap the croft, and when he came there he found nothing but the bare straw. Every one of the ears of the wheat was cut from off the stalk, and all the ears carried entirely away, and nothing but the straw left. And at this he marvelled greatly.

Then he went to look at another croft, and behold that also was ripe. "Verily," said he, "this will I reap to-morrow." And on the morrow he came with the intent to reap it, and when he came there he found nothing but the bare straw. "Oh, gracious Heaven," he exclaimed, "I know that whosoever has begun my ruin is completing it, and has also destroyed the country with me."

Then he went to look at the third croft, and when he came there, finer wheat had there never been seen, and this also was ripe. "Evil betide me," said he, "if I watch not here to-night. Whoever carried off the other corn will come in like manner to take this. And I will know who it is." So he took his arms, and began to watch the croft. And he told Kicva all that had befallen. "Verily," said she, "what thinkest thou to do?" "I will watch the croft to-night," said he.

And he went to watch the croft. And at midnight, lo, there arose the loudest tumult in the world. And he looked, and behold the mightiest host of mice in the world, which could neither be numbered nor measured. And he knew not what it was until the

mice had made their way into the croft, and each of them climbing up the straw and bending it down with its weight, had cut off one of the ears of wheat, and had carried it away, leaving there the stalk, and he saw not a single stalk there that had not a mouse to it. And they all took their way, carrying the ears with them.

In wrath and anger did he rush upon the mice, but he could no more come up with them than if they had been gnats, or birds in the air, except one only, which though it was but sluggish, went so fast that a man on foot could scarce overtake it. And after this one he went, and he caught it and put it in his glove, and tied up the opening of the glove with a string, and kept it with him, and returned to the palace. Then he came to the hall where Kicva was, and he lighted a fire, and hung the glove by the string upon a peg. "What hast thou there, lord?" said Kicva. "A thief," said he, "that I found robbing me." "What kind of thief may it be, lord, that thou couldst put into thy glove?" said she. "Behold I will tell thee," he answered. Then he showed her how his fields had been wasted and destroyed, and how the mice came to the last of the fields in his sight. "And one of them was less nimble than the rest, and is now in my glove; to-morrow I will hang it, and before Heaven, if I had them, I would hang them all." "My lord," said she, "this is marvellous; but yet it would be unseemly for a man of dignity like thee to be hanging such a reptile as this. And if thou doest right, thou wilt not meddle with the creature, but wilt let it go." "Woe betide me," said he, "if I would not hang them all could I catch them, and such as I have I will hang." "Verily, lord," said she, "there is no reason that I should succour this reptile, except to prevent discredit unto thee. Do therefore, lord, as thou wilt." "If I knew of any cause in the world wherefore thou shouldst succour it, I would take thy counsel concerning it," said Manawyddan, "but as I know of none, lady, I am minded to destroy it." "Do so willingly then," said she.

And then he went to the Gorsedd of Narberth, taking the mouse with him. And he set up two forks on the highest part of the Gorsedd. And while he was doing this, behold he saw a scholar coming towards him, in old and poor and tattered garments. And it was now seven years since he had seen in that place either man or beast, except those four persons who had remained together until two of them were lost.

"My lord," said the scholar, "good day to thee." "Heaven prosper thee, and my greeting be unto thee. And whence dost thou come, scholar?" asked he. "I come, lord, from singing in Lloegyr; and wherefore dost thou inquire?" "Because for the last seven years," answered he, "I have seen no man here save four secluded persons, and thyself this moment." "Truly, lord," said he, "I go through this land unto mine own. And what work art thou upon, lord?" "I am hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "What manner of thief is that?" asked the scholar. "I see a creature in thy hand like unto a mouse, and ill does it become a man of rank equal to thine to touch a reptile such as this. Let it go forth free." "I will not let it go free, by Heaven," said he; "I caught it robbing me, and the doom of a thief will I inflict upon it, and I will hang it." "Lord," said he, "rather than see a man of rank equal to thine at such a work as this, I would give thee a pound which I have received as alms, to let the reptile go forth free." "I will not let it go free," said he, "by Heaven, neither will I sell it." "As thou wilt, lord," he answered; "except that I would not see a man of rank equal to thine touching such a reptile, I care nought." And the scholar went his way.

And as he was placing the crossbeam upon the two forks, behold a priest came towards him upon a horse covered with trap-pings. "Good day to thee, lord," said he. "Heaven prosper thee," said Manawyddan; "thy blessing." "The blessing of Heaven be upon thee. And what, lord, art thou doing?" "I am hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "What manner of thief, lord?" asked he. "A creature," he answered, "in form of a mouse. It has been robbing me, and I am inflicting upon it the doom of a thief." "Lord," said he, "rather than see thee touch this reptile, I would purchase its freedom." "By my confession to Heaven, neither will I sell it nor set it free." "It is true, lord, that it is worth nothing to buy; but rather than see thee defile thyself by touching such a reptile as this, I will give thee three pounds to let it go." "I will not, by Heaven," said he, "take any price for at. As it ought, so

shall it be hanged." "Willingly, lord, do thy good pleasure." And the priest went his way.

Then he noosed the string around the mouse's neck, and as he was about to draw it up, behold, he saw a bishop's retinue with his sumpter-horses, and his attendants. And the bishop himself came towards him. And he stayed his work. "Lord bishop," said he, "thy blessing." "Heaven's blessing be unto thee," said he; "what work art thou upon?" "Hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "Is not that a mouse that I see in thy hand?" "Yes," answered he. "And she has robbed me." "Aye," said he, "since I have come at the doom of this reptile, I will ransom it of thee. I will give thee seven pounds for it, and that rather than see a man of rank equal to thine destroying so vile a reptile as this. Let it loose and thou shalt have the money." "I declare to Heaven that I will not set it loose." "If thou wilt not loose it for this, I will give thee four-and-twenty pounds of ready money to set it free." "I will not set it free, by Heaven, for as much again," said he. "If thou wilt not set it free for this, I will give thee all the horses that thou seest in this plain, and the seven loads of baggage, and the seven horses that they are upon." "By Heaven, I will not," he replied. "Since for this thou wilt not, do so at what price soever thou wilt." "I will do so," said he. "I will that Rhiannon and Pryderi be free," said he. "That thou shalt have," he answered. "Not yet will I loose the mouse, by Heaven." "What then wouldst thou?" "That the charm and the illusion be removed from the seven Cantrevs of Dyved." "This shalt thou have also; set therefore the mouse free." "I will not set it free, by Heaven," said he. "I will know who the mouse may be." "She is my wife." "Even though she be, I will not set her free. Wherefore came she to me?" "To despoil thee," he answered. "I am Llwyd the son of Kilcoed, and I cast the charm over the seven Cantrevs of Dyved. And it was to avenge Gwawl the son of Clud, from the friendship I had towards him, that I cast the charm. And upon Pryderi did I revenge Gwawl the son of Clud, for the game of Badger in the Bag, that Pwyll Pen Annwryn played upon him, which he did unadvisedly in the Court of Heveydd Hên. And when it was known that thou wast come to dwell in the land, my household came and besought me to transform them into mice, that they might destroy thy corn. And it was my own household that went the first night. And the second night also they went, and they destroyed thy two crofts. And the third night came unto me my wife and the ladies of the Court, and besought me to transform them. And I transformed them. Now she is pregnant. And had she not been pregnant thou wouldst not have been able to overtake her; but since this has taken place, and she has been caught, I will restore thee Pryderi and Rhiannon; and I will take the charm and illusion from off Dyved. I have now told thee who she is. Set her therefore free." "I will not set her free, by Heaven," said he. "What wilt thou more?" he asked. "I will that there be no more charm upon the seven Cantrevs of Dyved, and that none shall be put upon it henceforth." "This thou shalt have," said he. "Now set her free." "I will not, by my faith," he answered. "What wilt thou furthermore?" asked he. "Behold," said he, "this will I have; that vengeance be never taken for this, either upon Pryderi or Rhiannon, or upon me." "All this shalt thou have. And truly thou hast done wisely in asking this. Upon thy head would have lighted all this trouble." "Yea," said he, "for fear thereof was it, that I required this." "Set now my wife at liberty." "I will not, by Heaven," said he, "until I see Pryderi and Rhiannon with me free." "Behold, here they come," he answered.

And thereupon behold Pryderi and Rhiannon. And he rose up to meet them, and greeted them, and sat down beside them. "Ah, Chieftain, set now my wife at liberty," said the bishop. "Hast thou not received all thou didst ask?" "I will release her gladly," said he. And thereupon he set her free.

Then Llwyd struck her with a magic wand, and she was changed back into a young woman, the fairest ever seen.

"Look around upon thy land," said he, "and then thou wilt see it all tilled and peopled, as it was in its best state." And he rose up and looked forth. And when he looked he saw all the lands tilled, and full of herds and dwellings. "What bondage," he inquired, "has there been upon Pryderi and Rhiannon?" "Pryderi has had the knockers of the gate of my palace about his neck, and Rhiannon has had the collars of the asses, after they have been carrying hay,

about her neck."

And such had been their bondage.

And by reason of this bondage is this story called the Mabinogi of Mynnweir and Mynord.

And thus ends this portion of the Mabinogi.

MATH THE SON OF MATHONWY THIS IS THE FOURTH PORTION OF THE MABINOGE

Math the son of Mathonwy was lord over Gwynedd, and Pryderi the son of Pwyll was lord over the one-and-twenty Cantrevs of the South; and these were the seven Cantrevs of Dyved, and the seven Cantrevs of Morganwc, the four Cantrevs of Ceredigiawn, and the three of Ystrad Tywi.

At that time, Math the son of Mathonwy could not exist unless his feet were in the lap of a maiden, except only when he was prevented by the tumult of war. Now the maiden who was with him was Goewin, the daughter of Pebin of Dôl Pebin, in Arvon, and she was the fairest maiden of her time who was known there.

And Math dwelt always at Caer Dathyl, in Arvon, and was not able to go the circuit of the land, but Gilvaethwy the son of Don, and Eneyd the son of Don, his nephews, the sons of his sisters, with his household, went the circuit of the land in his stead.

Now the maiden was with Math continually, and Gilvaethwy the son of Don set his affections upon her, and loved her so that he knew not what he should do because of her, and therefrom beheld his hue, and his aspect, and his spirits changed for love of her, so that it was not easy to know him.

One day his brother Gwydion gazed steadfastly upon him. "Youth," said he, "what aileth thee?" "Why," replied he, "what seest thou in me?" "I see," said he, "that thou hast lost thy aspect and thy hue; what, therefore, aileth thee?" "My lord brother," he answered, "that which aileth me, it will not profit me that I should own to any." "What may it be, my soul?" said he. "Thou knowest," he said, "that Math the son of Mathonwy has this property, that if men whisper together, in a tone how low soever, if the wind meet it, it becomes known unto him." "Yes," said Gwydion, "hold now thy peace, I know thy intent, thou lovest Goewin."

When he found that his brother knew his intent, he gave the heaviest sigh in the world. "Be silent, my soul, and sigh not," he said. "It is not thereby that thou wilt succeed. I will cause," said he, "if it cannot be otherwise, the rising of Gwynedd, and Powys, and Deheubarth, to seek the maiden. Be thou of glad cheer therefore, and I will compass it."

So they went unto Math the son of Mathonwy. "Lord," said Gwydion, "I have heard that there have come to the South some beasts, such as were never known in this island before." "What are they called?" he asked. "Pigs, lord." "And what kind of animals are they?" "They are small animals, and their flesh is better than the flesh of oxen." "They are small, then?" "And they change their names. Swine are they now called." "Who owneth them?" "Pryderi the son of Pwyll; they were sent him from Annwryn, by Arawn the king of Annwryn, and still they keep that name, half hog, half pig." "Verily," asked he, "and by what means may they be obtained from him?" "I will go, lord, as one of twelve, in the guise of bards, to seek the swine." "But it may be that he will refuse you," said he. "My journey will not be evil, lord," said he; "I will not come back without the swine." "Gladly," said he, "go thou forward."

So he and Gilvaethwy went, and ten other men with them. And they came into Ceredigiawn, to the place that is now called Rhudlan Teivi, where the palace of Pryderi was. In the guise of bards they came in, and they were received joyfully, and Gwydion was placed beside Pryderi that night.

"Of a truth," said Pryderi, "gladly would I have a tale from some of your men yonder." "Lord," said Gwydion, "we have a custom that the first night that we come to the Court of a great man, the chief of song recites. Gladly will I relate a tale." Now Gwydion was the best teller of tales in the world, and he diverted all the Court that night with pleasant discourse and with tales, so that

he charmed every one in the Court, and it pleased Pryderi to talk with him.

And after this, "Lord," said he unto Pryderi, "were it more pleasing to thee, that another should discharge my errand unto thee, than that I should tell thee myself what it is?" "No," he answered, "ample speech hast thou." "Behold then, lord," said he, "my errand. It is to crave from thee the animals that were sent thee from Annwryn." "Verily," he replied, "that were the easiest thing in the world to grant, were there not a covenant between me and my land concerning them. And the covenant is that they shall not go from me, until they have produced double their number in the land." "Lord," said he, "I can set thee free from those words, and this is the way I can do so; give me not the swine to-night, neither refuse them unto me, and to-morrow I will show thee an exchange for them."

And that night he and his fellows went unto their lodging, and they took counsel. "Ah, my men," said he, "we shall not have the swine for the asking." "Well," said they, "how may they be obtained?" "I will cause them to be obtained," said Gwydion.

Then he betook himself to his arts, and began to work a charm. And he caused twelve chargers to appear, and twelve black greyhounds, each of them white-breasted, and having upon them twelve collars and twelve leashes, such as no one that saw them could know to be other than gold. And upon the horses twelve saddles, and every part which should have been of iron was entirely of gold, and the bridles were of the same workmanship. And with the horses and the dogs he came to Pryderi.

"Good day unto thee, lord," said he. "Heaven prosper thee," said the other, "and greetings be unto thee." "Lord," said he, "behold here is a release for thee from the word which thou spakest last evening concerning the swine; that thou wouldest neither give nor sell them. Thou mayest exchange them for that which is better. And I will give these twelve horses, all caparisoned as they are, with their saddles and their bridles, and these twelve greyhounds, with their collars and their leashes as thou seest, and the twelve gilded shields that thou beholdest yonder." Now these he had formed of fungus. "Well," said he, "we will take counsel." And they consulted together, and determined to give the swine to Gwydion, and to take his horses and his dogs and his shields.

Then Gwydion and his men took their leave, and began to journey forth with the pigs. "Ah, my comrades," said Gwydion, "it is needful that we journey with speed. The illusion will not last but from the one hour to the same to-morrow."

And that night they journeyed as far as the upper part of Ceredigiawn, to the place which, from that cause, is called Mochdrev still. And the next day they took their course through Melenydd, and came that night to the town which is likewise for that reason called Mochdrev between Keri and Arwystli. And thence they journeyed forward; and that night they came as far as that Commot in Powys, which also upon account thereof is called Mochnant, and there tarried they that night. And they journeyed thence to the Cantrev of Rhos, and the place where they were that night is still called Mochdrev.

"My men," said Gwydion, "we must push forward to the fastnesses of Gwynedd with these animals, for there is a gathering of hosts in pursuit of us." So they journeyed on to the highest town of Arllechwedd, and there they made a sty for the swine, and therefore was the name of Creuwyrion given to that town. And after they had made the sty for the swine, they proceeded to Math the son of Mathonwy, at Caer Dathyl. And when they came there, the country was rising. "What news is there here?" asked Gwydion. "Pryderi is assembling one-and-twenty Cantrevs to pursue after you," answered they. "It is marvellous that you should have journeyed so slowly." "Where are the animals whereof you went in quest?" said Math. "They have had a sty made for them in the other Cantrev below," said Gwydion.

Thereupon, lo, they heard the trumpets and the host in the land, and they arrayed themselves and set forward and came to Penardd in Arvon.

And at night Gwydion the son of Don, and Gilvaethwy his brother, returned to Caer Dathyl; and Gilvaethwy took Math the son of Mathonwy's couch. And while he turned out the other

damsels from the room discourteously, he made Goewin unwillingly remain.

And when they saw the day on the morrow, they went back unto the place where Math the son of Mathonwy was with his host; and when they came there, the warriors were taking counsel in what district they should await the coming of Pryderi, and the men of the South. So they went in to the council. And it was resolved to wait in the strongholds of Gwynedd, in Arvon. So within the two Maenors they took their stand, Maenor Penardd and Maenor Coed Alun. And there Pryderi attacked them, and there the combat took place. And great was the slaughter on both sides; but the men of the South were forced to flee. And they fled unto the place which is still called Nantcall. And thither did they follow them, and they made a vast slaughter of them there, so that they fled again as far as the place called Dol Pen Maen, and there they halted and sought to make peace.

And that he might have peace, Pryderi gave hostages, Gwrgi Gwastra gave he and three-and-twenty others, sons of nobles. And after this they journeyed in peace even unto Traeth Mawr; but as they went on together towards Melenryd, the men on foot could not be restrained from shooting. Pryderi dispatched unto Math an embassy to pray him to forbid his people, and to leave it between him and Gwydion the son of Don, for that he had caused all this. And the messengers came to Math. "Of a truth," said Math, "I call Heaven to witness, if it be pleasing unto Gwydion the son of Don, I will so leave it gladly. Never will I compel any to go to fight, but that we ourselves should do our utmost."

"Verily," said the messengers, "Pryderi saith that it were more fair that the man who did him this wrong should oppose his own body to his, and let his people remain unscathed." "I declare to Heaven, I will not ask the men of Gwynedd to fight because of me. If I am allowed to fight Pryderi myself, gladly will I oppose my body to his." And this answer they took back to Pryderi. "Truly," said Pryderi, "I shall require no one to demand my rights but myself."

Then these two came forth and armed themselves, and they fought. And by force of strength, and fierceness, and by the magic and charms of Gwydion, Pryderi was slain. And at Maen Tyriawc, above Melenryd, was he buried, and there is his grave.

And the men of the South set forth in sorrow towards their own land; nor is it a marvel that they should grieve, seeing that they had lost their lord, and many of their best warriors, and for the most part their horses and their arms.

The men of Gwynedd went back joyful and in triumph. "Lord," said Gwydion unto Math, "would it not be right for us to release the hostages of the men of the South, which they pledged unto us for peace? for we ought not to put them in prison." "Let them then be set free," saith Math. So that youth, and the other hostages that were with him, were set free to follow the men of the South.

Math himself went forward to Caer Dathyl. Gilvaethwy the son of Don, and they of the household that were with him, went to make the circuit of Gwynedd as they were wont, without coming to the Court. Math went into his chamber, and caused a place to be prepared for him whereon to recline, so that he might put his feet in the maiden's lap. "Lord," said Goewin, "seek now another to hold thy feet, for I am now a wife." "What meaneth this?" said he. "An attack, lord, was made unawares upon me; but I held not my peace, and there was no one in the Court who knew not of it. Now the attack was made by thy nephews, lord, the sons of thy sister, Gwydion the son of Don, and Gilvaethwy the son of Don; unto me they did wrong, and unto thee dishonour." "Verily," he exclaimed, "I will do to the utmost of my power concerning this matter. But first I will cause thee to have compensation, and then will I have amends made unto myself. As for thee, I will take thee to be my wife, and the possession of my dominions will I give unto thy hands."

And Gwydion and Gilvaethwy came not near the Court, but stayed in the confines of the land until it was forbidden to give them meat and drink. At first they came not near unto Math, but at the last they came. "Lord," said they, "good day to thee." "Well," said he, "is it to make me compensation that ye are come?" "Lord," they said, "we are at thy will." "By my will I would not have lost

my warriors, and so many arms as I have done. You cannot compensate me my shame, setting aside the death of Pryderi. But since ye come hither to be at my will, I shall begin your punishment forthwith."

Then he took his magic wand, and struck Gilvaethwy, so that he became a deer, and he seized upon the other hastily lest he should escape from him. And he struck him with the same magic wand, and he became a deer also. "Since now ye are in bonds, I will that ye go forth together and be companions, and possess the nature of the animals whose form ye bear. And this day twelvemonth come hither unto me."

At the end of a year from that day, lo there was a loud noise under the chamber wall, and the barking of the dogs of the palace together with the noise. "Look," said he, "what is without." "Lord," said one, "I have looked; there are there two deer, and a fawn with them." Then he arose and went out. And when he came he beheld the three animals. And he lifted up his wand. "As ye were deer last year, be ye wild hogs each and either of you, for the year that is to come." And thereupon he struck them with the magic wand. "The young one will I take and cause to be baptized." Now the name that he gave him was Hydwn. "Go ye and be wild swine, each and either of you, and be ye of the nature of wild swine. And this day twelvemonth be ye here under the wall."

At the end of the year the barking of dogs was heard under the wall of the chamber. And the Court assembled, and thereupon he arose and went forth, and when he came forth he beheld three beasts. Now these were the beasts that he saw; two wild hogs of the woods, and a well-grown young one with them. And he was very large for his age. "Truly," said Math, "this one will I take and cause to be baptized." And he struck him with his magic wand, and he became a fine fair auburn-haired youth, and the name that he gave him was Hychdwn. "Now as for you, as ye were wild hogs last year, be ye wolves each and either of you for the year that is to come." Thereupon he struck them with his magic wand, and they became wolves. "And be ye of like nature with the animals whose semblance ye bear, and return here this day twelvemonth beneath this wall."

And at the same day at the end of the year, he heard a clamour and a barking of dogs under the wall of the chamber. And he rose and went forth. And when he came, behold, he saw two wolves, and a strong cub with them. "This one will I take," said Math, "and I will cause him to be baptized; there is a name prepared for him, and that is Bleiddwn. Now these three, such are they:—

The three sons of Gilvaethwy the false,
The three faithful combatants,
Bleiddwn, Hydwn, and Hychdwn the Tall."

Then he struck the two with his magic wand, and they resumed their own nature. "Oh men," said he, "for the wrong that ye did unto me sufficient has been your punishment and your dishonour. Prepare now precious ointment for these men, and wash their heads, and equip them." And this was done.

And after they were equipped, they came unto him. "Oh men," said he, "you have obtained peace, and you shall likewise have friendship. Give your counsel unto me, what maiden I shall seek." "Lord," said Gwydion the son of Don, "it is easy to give thee counsel; seek Arianrod, the daughter of Don, thy niece, thy sister's daughter."

And they brought her unto him, and the maiden came in. "Ha, damsel," said he, "art thou the maiden?" "I know not, lord, other than that I am." Then he took up his magic wand, and bent it. "Step over this," said he, "and I shall know if thou art the maiden." Then stepped she over the magic wand, and there appeared forthwith a fine chubby yellow-haired boy. And at the crying out of the boy, she went towards the door. And thereupon some small form was seen; but before any one could get a second glimpse of it, Gwydion had taken it, and had flung a scarf of velvet around it and hidden it. Now the place where he hid it was the bottom of a chest at the foot of his bed.

"Verily," said Math the son of Mathonwy, concerning the fine yellow-haired boy, "I will cause this one to be baptized, and Dylan is the name I will give him."

So they had the boy baptized, and as they baptized him he plunged into the sea. And immediately when he was in the sea,

he took its nature, and swam as well as the best fish that was therein. And for that reason was he called Dylan, the son of the Wave. Beneath him no wave ever broke. And the blow whereby he came to his death, was struck by his uncle Govannon. The third fatal blow was it called.

As Gwydion lay one morning on his bed awake, he heard a cry in the chest at his feet; and though it was not loud, it was such that he could hear it. Then he arose in haste, and opened the chest: and when he opened it, he beheld an infant boy stretching out his arms from the folds of the scarf, and casting it aside. And he took up the boy in his arms, and carried him to a place where he knew there was a woman that could nurse him. And he agreed with the woman that she should take charge of the boy. And that year he was nursed.

And at the end of the year he seemed by his size as though he were two years old. And the second year he was a big child, and able to go to the Court by himself. And when he came to the Court, Gwydion noticed him, and the boy became familiar with him, and loved him better than any one else. Then was the boy reared at the Court until he was four years old, when he was as big as though he had been eight.

And one day Gwydion walked forth, and the boy followed him, and he went to the Castle of Arianrod, having the boy with him; and when he came into the Court, Arianrod arose to meet him, and greeted him and bade him welcome. "Heaven prosper thee," said he. "Who is the boy that followeth thee?" she asked. "This youth, he is thy son," he answered. "Alas," said she, "what has come unto thee that thou shouldst shame me thus? wherefore dost thou seek my dishonour, and retain it so long as this?" "Unless thou suffer dishonour greater than that of my bringing up such a boy as this, small will be thy disgrace." "What is the name of the boy?" said she. "Verily," he replied, "he has not yet a name." "Well," she said, "I lay this destiny upon him, that he shall never have a name until he receives one from me." "Heaven bears me witness," answered he, "that thou art a wicked woman. But the boy shall have a name how displeasing soever it may be unto thee. As for thee, that which afflicts thee is that thou art no longer called a damsel." And thereupon he went forth in wrath, and returned to Caer Dathyl and there he tarried that night.

And the next day he arose and took the boy with him, and went to walk on the seashore between that place and Aber Menai. And there he saw some sedges and seaweed, and he turned them into a boat. And out of dry sticks and sedges he made some Cordovan leather, and a great deal thereof, and he coloured it in such a manner that no one ever saw leather more beautiful than it. Then he made a sail to the boat, and he and the boy went in it to the port of the castle of Arianrod. And he began forming shoes and stitching them, until he was observed from the castle. And when he knew that they of the castle were observing him, he disguised his aspect, and put another semblance upon himself, and upon the boy, so that they might not be known. "What men are those in yonder boat?" said Arianrod. "They are cordwainers," answered they. "Go and see what kind of leather they have, and what kind of work they can do."

So they came unto them. And when they came he was colouring some Cordovan leather, and gilding it. And the messengers came and told her this. "Well," said she, "take the measure of my foot, and desire the cordwainer to make shoes for me." So he made the shoes for her, yet not according to the measure, but larger. The shoes then were brought unto her, and behold they were too large. "These are too large," said she, "but he shall receive their value. Let him also make some that are smaller than they." Then he made her others that were much smaller than her foot, and sent them unto her. "Tell him that these will not go on my feet," said she. And they told him this. "Verily," said he, "I will not make her any shoes, unless I see her foot." And this was told unto her. "Truly," she answered, "I will go unto him."

So she went down to the boat, and when she came there, he was shaping shoes and the boy stitching them. "Ah, lady," said he, "good day to thee." "Heaven prosper thee," said she. "I marvel that thou canst not manage to make shoes according to a measure." "I could not," he replied, "but now I shall be able."

Thereupon behold a wren stood upon the deck of the boat, and the boy shot at it, and hit it in the leg between the sinew and the bone. Then she smiled. "Verily," said she, "with a steady hand did the lion aim at it." "Heaven reward thee not, but now has he got a name. And a good enough name it is. Llew Llaw Gyffes be he called henceforth."

Then the work disappeared in seaweed and sedges, and he went on with it no further. And for that reason was he called the third Gold-shoemaker. "Of a truth," said she, "thou wilt not thrive the better for doing evil unto me." "I have done thee no evil yet," said he. Then he restored the boy to his own form. "Well," said she, "I will lay a destiny upon this boy, that he shall never have arms and armour until I invest him with them." "By Heaven," said he, "let thy malice be what it may, he shall have arms."

Then they went towards Dinas Dinllew, and there he brought up Llew Llaw Gyffes, until he could manage any horse, and he was perfect in features, and strength, and stature. And then Gwydion saw that he languished through the want of horses and arms. And he called him unto him. "Ah, youth," said he, "we will go tomorrow on an errand together. Be therefore more cheerful than thou art." "That I will," said the youth.

Next morning, at the dawn of day, they arose. And they took way along the sea coast, up towards Bryn Aryen. And at the top of Cevn Clydno they equipped themselves with horses, and went towards the Castle of Arianrod. And they changed their form, and pricked towards the gate in the semblance of two youths, but the aspect of Gwydion was more staid than that of the other. "Porter," said he, "go thou in and say that there are here bards from Glamorgan." And the porter went in. "The welcome of Heaven be unto them, let them in," said Arianrod.

With great joy were they greeted. And the hall was arranged, and they went to meat. When meat was ended, Arianrod discoursed with Gwydion of tales and stories. Now Gwydion was an excellent teller of tales. And when it was time to leave off feasting, a chamber was prepared for them, and they went to rest.

In the early twilight Gwydion arose, and he called unto him his magic and his power. And by the time that the day dawned, there resounded through the land uproar, and trumpets and shouts. When it was now day, they heard a knocking at the door of the chamber, and therewith Arianrod asking that it might be opened. Up rose the youth and opened unto her, and she entered and a maiden with her. "Ah, good men," she said, "in evil plight are we." "Yes, truly," said Gwydion, "we have heard trumpets and shouts; what thinkest thou that they may mean?" "Verily," said she, "we cannot see the colour of the ocean by reason of all the ships, side by side. And they are making for the land with all the speed they can. And what can we do?" said she. "Lady," said Gwydion, "there is none other counsel than to close the castle upon us, and to defend it as best we may." "Truly," said she, "may Heaven reward you. And do you defend it. And here may you have plenty of arms."

And thereupon went she forth for the arms, and behold she returned, and two maidens, and suits of armour for two men, with her. "Lady," said he, "do you accoutre this stripling, and I will arm myself with the help of thy maidens. Lo, I hear the tumult of the men approaching." "I will do so, gladly." So she armed him fully, and that right cheerfully. "Hast thou finished arming the youth?" said he. "I have finished," she answered. "I likewise have finished," said Gwydion. "Let us now take off our arms, we have no need of them." "Wherefore?" said she. "Here is the army around the house." "Oh, lady, there is here no army." "Oh," cried she, "whence then was this tumult?" "The tumult was but to break thy prophecy and to obtain arms for thy son. And now has he got arms without any thanks unto thee." "By Heaven," said Arianrod, "thou art a wicked man. Many a youth might have lost his life through the uproar thou hast caused in this Cantrev to-day. Now will I lay a destiny upon this youth," she said, "that he shall never have a wife of the race that now inhabits this earth." "Verily," said he, "thou wast ever a malicious woman, and no one ought to support thee. A wife shall he have notwithstanding."

They went thereupon unto Math the son of Mathonwy, and complained unto him most bitterly of Arianrod. Gwydion showed him also how he had procured arms for the youth. "Well," said

Math, "we will seek, I and thou, by charms and illusion, to form a wife for him out of flowers. He has now come to man's stature, and he is the comeliest youth that was ever beheld." So they took the blossoms of the oak, and the blossoms of the broom, and the blossoms of the meadow-sweet, and produced from them a maiden, the fairest and most graceful that man ever saw. And they baptized her, and gave her the name of Blodeuwedd.

After she had become his bride, and they had feasted, said Gwydion, "It is not easy for a man to maintain himself without possessions." "Of a truth," said Math, "I will give the young man the best Cantrev to hold." "Lord," said he, "what Cantrev is that?" "The Cantrev of Dinodig," he answered. Now it is called at this day Eivionydd and Arduwy. And the place in the Cantrev where he dwelt, was a palace of his in a spot called Mur y Castell, on the confines of Arduwy. There dwelt he and reigned, and both he and his sway were beloved by all.

One day he went forth to Caer Dathyl, to visit Math the son of Mathonwy. And on the day that he set out for Caer Dathyl, Blodeuwedd walked in the Court. And she heard the sound of a horn. And after the sound of the horn, behold a tired stag went by, with dogs and huntsmen following it. And after the dogs and the huntsmen there came a crowd of men on foot. "Send a youth," said she, "to ask who yonder host may be." So a youth went, and inquired who they were. "Gronw Pebyr is this, the lord of Penllyn," said they. And thus the youth told her.

Gronw Pebyr pursued the stag, and by the river Cynvael he overtook the stag and killed it. And what with flaying the stag and baiting his dogs, he was there until the night began to close in upon him. And as the day departed and the night drew near, he came to the gate of the Court. "Verily," said Blodeuwedd, "the Chieftain will speak ill of us if we let him at this hour depart to another land without inviting him in." "Yes, truly, lady," said they, "it will be most fitting to invite him."

Then went messengers to meet him and bid him in. And he accepted her bidding gladly, and came to the Court, and Blodeuwedd went to meet him, and greeted him, and bade him welcome. "Lady," said he, "Heaven repay thee thy kindness."

When they had disaccoutred themselves, they went to sit down. And Blodeuwedd looked upon him, and from the moment that she looked on him she became filled with his love. And he gazed on her, and the same thought came unto him as unto her, so that he could not conceal from her that he loved her, but he declared unto her that he did so. Thereupon she was very joyful. And all their discourse that night was concerning the affection and love which they felt one for the other, and which in no longer space than one evening had arisen. And that evening passed they in each other's company.

The next day he sought to depart. But she said, "I pray thee go not from me to-day." And that night he tarried also. And that night they consulted by what means they might always be together. "There is none other counsel," said he, "but that thou strive to learn from Llew Llaw Gyffes in what manner he will meet his death. And this must thou do under the semblance of solicitude concerning him."

The next day Gronw sought to depart. "Verily," said she, "I will counsel thee not to go from me to-day." "At thy instance will I not go," said he, "albeit, I must say, there is danger that the chief who owns the palace may return home." "To-morrow," answered she, "will I indeed permit thee to go forth."

The next day he sought to go, and she hindered him not. "Be mindful," said Gronw, "of what I have said unto thee, and converse with him fully, and that under the guise of the dalliance of love, and find out by what means he may come to his death."

That night Llew Llaw Gyffes returned to his home. And the day they spent in discourse, and minstrelsy, and feasting. And at night they went to rest, and he spoke to Blodeuwedd once, and he spoke to her a second time. But, for all this, he could not get from her one word. "What aileth thee?" said he, "art thou well?" "I was thinking," said she, "of that which thou didst never think of concerning me; for I was sorrowful as to thy death, lest thou shouldst go sooner than I." "Heaven reward thy care for me," said he, "but until Heaven take me I shall not easily be slain." "For the sake of Heaven, and for mine, show me how thou mightest

be slain. My memory in guarding is better than thine." "I will tell thee gladly," said he. "Not easily can I be slain, except by a wound. And the spear wherewith I am struck must be a year in the forming. And nothing must be done towards it except during the sacrifice on Sundays." "Is this certain?" asked she. "It is in truth," he answered. "And I cannot be slain within a house, nor without. I cannot be slain on horseback nor on foot." "Verily," said she, "in what manner then canst thou be slain?" "I will tell thee," said he. "By making a bath for me by the side of a river, and by putting a roof over the cauldron, and thatching it well and tightly, and bringing a buck, and putting it beside the cauldron. Then if I place one foot on the buck's back, and the other on the edge of the cauldron, whosoever strikes me thus will cause my death." "Well," said she, "I thank Heaven that it will be easy to avoid this."

No sooner had she held this discourse than she sent to Gronw Pebyr. Gronw toiled at making the spear, and that day twelve-month it was ready. And that very day he caused her to be informed thereof.

"Lord," said Blodeuwedd unto Llew, "I have been thinking how it is possible that what thou didst tell me formerly can be true; wilt thou show me in what manner thou couldst stand at once upon the edge of a cauldron and upon a buck, if I prepare the bath for thee?" "I will show thee," said he.

Then she sent unto Gronw, and bade him be in ambush on the hill which is now called Bryn Kyvergyr, on the bank of the river Cynvael. She caused also to be collected all the goats that were in the Cantrev, and had them brought to the other side of the river, opposite Bryn Kyvergyr.

And the next day she spoke thus. "Lord," said she, "I have caused the roof and the bath to be prepared, and lo! they are ready." "Well," said Llew, "we will go gladly to look at them."

The day after they came and looked at the bath. "Wilt thou go into the bath, lord?" said she. "Willingly will I go in," he answered. So into the bath he went, and he anointed himself. "Lord," said she, "behold the animals which thou didst speak of as being called bucks." "Well," said he, "cause one of them to be caught and brought here." And the buck was brought. Then Llew rose out of the bath, and put on his trowsers, and he placed one foot on the edge of the bath and the other on the buck's back.

Thereupon Gronw rose up from the bill which is called Bryn Kyvergyr, and he rested on one knee, and flung the poisoned dart and struck him on the side, so that the shaft started out, but the head of the dart remained in. Then he flew up in the form of an eagle and gave a fearful scream. And thenceforth was he no more seen.

As soon as he departed Gronw and Blodeuwedd went together unto the palace that night. And the next day Gronw arose and took possession of Arduwy. And after he had overcome the land, he ruled over it, so that Arduwy and Penllyn were both under his sway.

Then these tidings reached Math the son of Mathonwy. And heaviness and grief came upon Math, and much more upon Gwydion than upon him. "Lord," said Gwydion, "I shall never rest until I have tidings of my nephew." "Verily," said Math, "may Heaven be thy strength." Then Gwydion set forth and began to go forward. And he went through Gwynedd and Powys to the confines. And when he had done so, he went into Arvon, and came to the house of a vassal, in Maenawr Penardd. And he alighted at the house, and stayed there that night. The man of the house and his house-hold came in, and last of all came there the swineherd. Said the man of the house to the swineherd, "Well, youth, hath thy sow come in to-night?" "She hath," said he, "and is this instant returned to the pigs." "Where doth this sow go to?" said Gwydion. "Every day, when the sty is opened, she goeth forth and none can catch sight of her, neither is it known whither she goeth more than if she sank into the earth." "Wilt thou grant unto me," said Gwydion, "not to open the sty until I am beside the sty with thee?" "This will I do, right gladly," he answered.

That night they went to rest; and as soon as the swineherd saw the light of day, he awoke Gwydion. And Gwydion arose and dressed himself, and went with the swineherd, and stood beside the sty. Then the swineherd opened the sty. And as soon as he opened it, behold she leaped forth, and set off with great

speed. And Gwydion followed her, and she went against the course of a river, and made for a brook, which is now called Nant y Llew. And there she halted and began feeding. And Gwydion came under the tree, and looked what it might be that the sow was feeding on. And he saw that she was eating putrid flesh and vermin. Then looked he up to the top of the tree, and as he looked he beheld on the top of the tree an eagle, and when the eagle shook itself, there fell vermin and putrid flesh from off it, and these the sow devoured. And it seemed to him that the eagle was Llew. And he sang an Englyn:—

“Oak that grows between the two banks;
Darkened is the sky and hill!
Shall I not tell him by his wounds,
That this is Llew?”

Upon this the eagle came down until he reached the centre of the tree. And Gwydion sang another Englyn:—

“Oak that grows in upland ground,
Is it not wetted by the rain? Has it not been drenched
By nine score tempests?
It bears in its branches Llew Llaw Gyffes!”

Then the eagle came down until he was on the lowest branch of the tree, and thereupon this Englyn did Gwydion sing:—

“Oak that grows beneath the steep;
Stately and majestic is its aspect!
Shall I not speak it?
That Llew will come to my lap?”

And the eagle came down upon Gwydion’s knee. And Gwydion struck him with his magic wand, so that he returned to his own form. No one ever saw a more piteous sight, for he was nothing but skin and bone.

Then he went unto Caer Dathyl, and there were brought unto him good physicians that were in Gwynedd, and before the end of the year he was quite healed.

“Lord,” said he unto Math the son of Mathonwy, “it is full time now that I have retribution of him by whom I have suffered all this woe.” “Truly,” said Math, “he will never be able to maintain himself in the possession of that which is thy right.” “Well,” said Llew, “the sooner I have my right, the better shall I be pleased.”

Then they called together the whole of Gwynedd, and set forth to Arduwy. And Gwydion went on before and proceeded to Mur y Castell. And when Blodeuwedd heard that he was coming, she took her maidens with her, and fled to the mountain. And they passed through the river Cynvael, and went towards a court that there was upon the mountain, and through fear they could not proceed except with their faces looking backwards, so that unawares they fell into the lake. And they were all drowned except Blodeuwedd herself, and her Gwydion overtook. And he said unto her, “I will not slay thee, but I will do unto thee worse than that. For I will turn thee into a bird; and because of the shame thou hast done unto Llew Llaw Gyffes, thou shalt never show thy face in the light of day henceforth; and that through fear of all the other birds. For it shall be their nature to attack thee, and to chase thee from wheresoever they may find thee. And thou shalt not lose thy name, but shalt be always called Blodeuwedd.” Now Blodeuwedd is an owl in the language of this present time, and for this reason is the owl hateful unto all birds. And even now the owl is called Blodeuwedd.

Then Gronw Pebyr withdrew unto Penllyn, and he dispatched thence an embassy. And the messengers he sent asked Llew Llaw Gyffes if he would take land, or domain, or gold, or silver, for the injury he had received. “I will not, by my confession to Heaven,” said he. “Behold this is the least that I will accept from him; that he come to the spot where I was when he wounded me with the dart, and that I stand where he did, and that with a dart I take my aim at him. And this is the very least that I will accept.”

And this was told unto Gronw Pebyr. “Verily,” said he, “is it needful for me to do thus? My faithful warriors, and my household, and my foster-brothers, is there not one among you who will stand the blow in my stead?” “There is not, verily,” answered they. And because of their refusal to suffer one stroke for their lord, they are called the third disloyal tribe even unto this day. “Well,” said he, “I will meet it.”

Then they two went forth to the banks of the river Cynvael, and Gronw stood in the place where Llew Llaw Gyffes was when he struck him, and Llew in the place where Gronw was. Then said Gronw Pebyr unto Llew, “Since it was through the wiles of a woman that I did unto thee as I have done, I adjure thee by Heaven to let me place between me and the blow, the slab thou seest yonder on the river’s bank.” “Verily,” said Llew, “I will not refuse thee this.” “Ah,” said he, “may Heaven reward thee.” So Gronw took the slab and placed it between him and the blow.

Then Llew flung the dart at him, and it pierced the slab and went through Gronw likewise, so that it pierced through his back. And thus was Gronw Pebyr slain. And there is still the slab on the bank of the river Cynvael, in Arduwy, having the hole through it. And therefore is it even now called Llech Gronw.

A second time did Llew Llaw Gyffes take possession of the land, and prosperously did he govern it. And, as the story relates, he was lord after this over Gwynedd. And thus ends this portion of the Mabinogi.

THE DREAM OF MAXEN WLEDIG

Maxen Wledig was emperor of Rome, and he was a comelier man, and a better and a wiser than any emperor that had been before him. And one day he held a council of kings, and he said to his friends, “I desire to go to-morrow to hunt.” And the next day in the morning he set forth with his retinue, and came to the valley of the river that flowed towards Rome. And he hunted through the valley until mid-day. And with him also were two-and-thirty crowned kings, that were his vassals; not for the delight of hunting went the emperor with them, but to put himself on equal terms with those kings.

And the sun was high in the sky over their heads and the heat was great. And sleep came upon Maxen Wledig. And his attendants stood and set up their shields around him upon the shafts of their spears to protect him from the sun, and they placed a gold enamelled shield under his head; and so Maxen slept.

And he saw a dream. And this is the dream that he saw. He was journeying along the valley of the river towards its source; and he came to the highest mountain in the world. And he thought that the mountain was as high as the sky; and when he came over the mountain, it seemed to him that he went through the fairest and most level regions that man ever yet beheld, on the other side of the mountain. And he saw large and mighty rivers descending from the mountain to the sea, and towards the mouths of the rivers he proceeded. And as he journeyed thus, he came to the mouth of the largest river ever seen. And he beheld a great city at the entrance of the river, and a vast castle in the city, and he saw many high towers of various colours in the castle. And he saw a fleet at the mouth of the river, the largest ever seen. And he saw one ship among the fleet; larger was it by far, and fairer than all the others. Of such part of the ship as he could see above the water, one plank was gilded and the other silvered over. He saw a bridge of the bone of a whale from the ship to the land, and he thought that he went along the bridge, and came into the ship. And a sail was hoisted on the ship, and along the sea and the ocean was it borne. Then it seemed that he came to the fairest island in the whole world, and he traversed the island from sea to sea, even to the furthest shore of the island. Valleys he saw, and steeps, and rocks of wondrous height, and rugged precipices. Never yet saw he the like. And thence he beheld an island in the sea, facing this rugged land. And between him and this island was a country of which the plain was as large as the sea, the mountain as vast as the wood. And from the mountain he saw a river that flowed through the land and fell into the sea. And at the mouth of the river he beheld a castle, the fairest that man ever saw, and the gate of the castle was open, and he went into the castle. And in the castle he saw a fair hall, of which the roof seemed to be all gold, the walls of the hall seemed to be entirely of glittering precious gems, the doors all seemed to be of gold. Golden seats he saw in the hall, and silver tables. And on a seat opposite to him he beheld two auburn-haired youths playing at chess. He saw a silver board for the chess, and golden pieces thereon. The garments of the youths were of jet-black satin, and chaplets of ruddy gold bound their

hair, whereon were sparkling jewels of great price, rubies, and gems, alternately with imperial stones. Buskins of new Cordovan leather on their feet, fastened by slides of red gold.

And beside a pillar in the hall he saw a hoary-headed man, in a chair of ivory, with the figures of two eagles of ruddy gold thereon. Bracelets of gold were upon his arms, and many rings were on his hands, and a golden torque about his neck; and his hair was bound with a golden diadem. He was of powerful aspect. A chessboard of gold was before him, and a rod of gold, and a steel file in his hand. And he was carving out chessmen.

And he saw a maiden sitting before him in a chair of ruddy gold. Not more easy than to gaze upon the sun when brightest, was it to look upon her by reason of her beauty. A vest of white silk was upon the maiden, with clasps of red gold at the breast; and a surcoat of gold tissue upon her, and a frontlet of red gold upon her head, and rubies and gems were in the frontlet, alternating with pearls and imperial stones. And a girdle of ruddy gold was around her. She was the fairest sight that man ever beheld.

The maiden arose from her chair before him, and he threw his arms about the neck of the maiden, and they two sat down together in the chair of gold: and the chair was not less roomy for them both, than for the maiden alone. And as he had his arms about the maiden's neck, and his cheek by her cheek, behold, through the chafing of the dogs at their leashing, and the clashing of the shields as they struck against each other, and the beating together of the shafts of the spears, and the neighing of the horses and their prancing, the emperor awoke.

And when he awoke, nor spirit nor existence was left him, because of the maiden whom he had seen in his sleep, for the love of the maiden pervaded his whole frame. Then his household spake unto him. "Lord," said they, "is it not past the time for thee to take thy food?" Thereupon the emperor mounted his palfrey, the saddest man that mortal ever saw, and went forth towards Rome.

And thus he was during the space of a week. When they of the household went to drink wine and mead out of golden vessels, he went not with any of them. When they went to listen to songs and tales, he went not with them there; neither could he be persuaded to do anything but sleep. And as often as he slept, he beheld in his dreams the maiden he loved best; but except when he slept he saw nothing of her, for he knew not where in the world she was.

One day the page of the chamber spake unto him; now, although he was page of the chamber, he was king of the Romans. "Lord," said he, "all the people revile thee." "Wherefore do they revile me?" asked the emperor. "Because they can get neither message nor answer from thee as men should have from their lord. This is the cause why thou art spoken evil of." "Youth," said the emperor, "do thou bring unto me the wise men of Rome, and I will tell them wherefore I am sorrowful."

Then the wise men of Rome were brought to the emperor, and he spake to them. "Sages of Rome," said he, "I have seen a dream. And in the dream I beheld a maiden, and because of the maiden is there neither life, nor spirit, nor existence within me." "Lord," they answered, "since thou judgest us worthy to counsel thee, we will give thee counsel. And this is our counsel; that thou send messengers for three years to the three parts of the world to seek for thy dream. And as thou knowest not what day or what night good news may come to thee, the hope thereof will support thee."

So the messengers journeyed for the space of a year, wandering about the world, and seeking tidings concerning his dream. But when they came back at the end of the year, they knew not one word more than they did the day they set forth. And then was the emperor exceeding sorrowful, for he thought that he should never have tidings of her whom best he loved.

Then spoke the king of the Romans unto the emperor. "Lord," said he, "go forth to hunt by the way thou didst seem to go, whether it were to the east, or to the west." So the emperor went forth to the hunt, and he came to the bank of the river. "Behold," said he, "this is where I was when I saw the dream, and I went towards the source of the river westward."

And thereupon thirteen messengers of the emperor's set forth, and before them they saw a high mountain, which seemed to them to touch the sky. Now this was the guise in which the messengers

journeyed; one sleeve was on the cap of each of them in front, as a sign that they were messengers, in order that through what hostile land soever they might pass no harm might be done them. And when they were come over this mountain, they beheld vast plains, and large rivers flowing there through.

"Behold," said they, "the land which our master saw."

And they went along the mouths of the rivers, until they came to the mighty river which they saw flowing to the sea, and the vast city, and the many-coloured high towers in the castle. They saw the largest fleet in the world, in the harbour of the river, and one ship that was larger than any of the others. "Behold again," said they, "the dream that our master saw." And in the great ship they crossed the sea, and came to the Island of Britain. And they traversed the island until they came to Snowdon. "Behold," said they, "the rugged land that our master saw." And they went forward until they saw Anglesey before them, and until they saw Arvon likewise. "Behold," said they, "the land our master saw in his sleep." And they saw Aber Sain, and a castle at the mouth of the river. The portal of the castle saw they open, and into the castle they went, and they saw a hall in the castle. Then said they, "Behold, the hall which he saw in his sleep." They went into the hall, and they beheld two youths playing at chess on the golden bench. And they beheld the hoary-headed man beside the pillar, in the ivory chair, carving chessmen. And they beheld the maiden sitting on a chair of ruddy gold.

The messengers bent down upon their knees. "Empress of Rome, all hail!" "Ha, gentles," said the maiden, "ye bear the seeming of honourable men, and the badge of envoys, what mockery is this ye do to me?" "We mock thee not, lady; but the Emperor of Rome hath seen thee in his sleep, and he has neither life nor spirit left because of thee. Thou shalt have of us therefore the choice, lady, whether thou wilt go with us and be made empress of Rome, or that the emperor come hither and take thee for his wife?" "Ha, lords," said the maiden, "I will not deny what ye say, neither will I believe it too well. If the emperor love me, let him come here to seek me."

And by day and night the messengers hid them back. And when their horses failed, they bought other fresh ones. And when they came to Rome, they saluted the emperor, and asked their boon, which was given to them according as they named it. "We will be thy guides, lord," said they, "over sea and over land, to the place where is the woman whom best thou lovest, for we know her name, and her kindred, and her race."

And immediately the emperor set forth with his army. And these men were his guides. Towards the Island of Britain they went over the sea and the deep. And he conquered the Island from Beli the son of Manogan, and his sons, and drove them to the sea, and went forward even unto Arvon. And the emperor knew the land when he saw it. And when he beheld the castle of Aber Sain, "Look yonder," said he, "there is the castle wherein I saw the damsel whom I best love." And he went forward into the castle and into the hall, and there he saw Kynan the son of Eudav, and Adeon the son of Eudav, playing at chess. And he saw Eudav the son of Caradawc, sitting on a chair of ivory carving chessmen. And the maiden whom he had beheld in his sleep, he saw sitting on a chair of gold. "Empress of Rome," said he, "all hail!" And the emperor threw his arms about her neck; and that night she became his bride.

And the next day in the morning, the damsel asked her maiden portion. And he told her to name what she would. And she asked to have the Island of Britain for her father, from the Channel to the Irish Sea, together with the three adjacent Islands, to hold under the empress of Rome; and to have three chief castles made for her, an whatever places she might choose in the Island of Britain. And she chose to have the highest castle made at Arvon. And they brought thither earth from Rome that it might be more healthful for the emperor to sleep, and sit, and walk upon. After that the two other castles were made for her, which were Caerlleon and Caermarthen.

And one day the emperor went to hunt at Caermarthen, and he came so far as the top of Brevi Vawr, and there the emperor pitched his tent. And that encamping place is called Cadeir Maxen, even to this day. And because that he built the castle with a myriad

of men, he called it Caervyrddin. Then Helen bethought her to make high roads from one castle to another throughout the Island of Britain. And the roads were made. And for this cause are they called the roads of Helen Luyddawc, that she was sprung from a native of this island, and the men of the Island of Britain would not have made these great roads for any save for her.

Seven years did the emperor tarry in this Island. Now, at that time, the men of Rome had a custom, that whatsoever emperor should remain in other lands more than seven years should remain to his own overthrow, and should never return to Rome again.

So they made a new emperor. And this one wrote a letter of threat to Maxen. There was nought in the letter but only this. "If thou comest, and if thou ever comest to Rome." And even unto Caerlleon came this letter to Maxen, and these tidings. Then sent he a letter to the man who styled himself emperor in Rome. There was nought in that letter also but only this. "If I come to Rome, and if I come."

And thereupon Maxen set forth towards Rome with his army, and vanquished France and Bugundy, and every land on the way, and sat down before the city of Rome.

A year was the emperor before the city, and he was no nearer taking it than the first day. And after him there came the brothers of Helen Luyddawc from the Island of Britain, and a small host with them, and better warriors were in that small host than twice as many Romans. And the emperor was told that a host was seen, halting close to his army and encamping, and no man ever saw a fairer or better appointed host for its size, nor more handsome standards.

And Helen went to see the hosts, and she knew the standards of her brothers. Then came Kynan the son of Eudav, and Adeon the son of Eudav, to meet the emperor. And the emperor was glad because of them, and embraced them.

Then they looked at the Romans as they attacked the city. Said Kynan to his brother, "We will try to attack the city more expertly than this." So they measured by night the height of the wall, and they sent their carpenters to the wood, and a ladder was made for every four men of their number. Now when these were ready, every day at mid-day the emperors went to meat, and they ceased to fight on both sides till all had finished eating. And in the morning the men of Britain took their food and they drank until they were invigorated. And while the two emperors were at meat, the Britons came to the city, and placed their ladders against it, and forthwith they came in through the city.

The new emperor had no time to arm himself when they fell upon him, and slew him, and many others with him. And three nights and three days were they subduing the men that were in the city and taking the castle. And others of them kept the city, lest any of the host of Maxen should come therein, until they had subjected all to their will.

Then spake Maxen to Helen Luyddawc. "I marvel, lady," said he, "that thy brothers have not conquered this city for me." "Lord, emperor," she answered, "the wisest youths in the world are my brothers. Go thou thither and ask the city of them, and if it be in their possession thou shalt have it gladly." So the emperor and Helen went and demanded the city. And they told the emperor that none had taken the city, and that none could give it him, but the men of the Island of Britain. Then the gates of the city of Rome were opened, and the emperor sat on the throne, and all the men of Rome submitted themselves unto him.

The emperor then said unto Kynan and Adeon, "Lords," said he, "I have now had possession of the whole of my empire. This host give I unto you to vanquish whatever region ye may desire in the world."

So they set forth and conquered lands, and castles, and cities. And they slew all the men, but the women they kept alive. And thus they continued until the young men that had come with them were grown grey-headed, from the length of time they were upon this conquest.

Then spoke Kynan unto Adeon his brother, "Whether wilt thou rather," said he, "tarry in this land, or go back into the land whence thou didst come forth?" Now he chose to go back to his own land, and many with him. But Kynan tarried there with the other part and dwelt there.

And they took counsel and cut out the tongues of the women, lest they should corrupt their speech. And because of the silence of the women from their own speech, the men of Armorica are called Britons. From that time there came frequently, and still comes, that language from the Island of Britain.

And this dream is called the Dream of Maxen Wledig, emperor of Rome. And here it ends.

HERE IS THE STORY OF LLUDD AND LLEVELYS

Beli the Great, the son of Manogan, had three sons, Lludd, and Caswallawn, and Nynyaw; and according to the story he had a fourth son called Llevelys. And after the death of Beli, the kingdom of the Island of Britain fell into the hands of Llud his eldest son; and Lludd ruled prosperously, and rebuilt the walls of London, and encompassed it about with numberless towers. And after that he bade the citizens build houses therein, such as no houses in the kingdoms could equal. And moreover he was a mighty warrior, and generous and liberal in giving meat and drink to all that sought them. And though he had many castles and cities this one loved he more than any. And he dwelt therein most part of the year, and therefore was it called Caer Lludd, and at last Caer London. And after the stranger-race came there, it was called London, or Lwndrys.

Lludd loved Llevelys best of all his brothers, because he was a wise and discreet man. Having heard that the king of France had died, leaving no heir except a daughter, and that he had left all his possessions in her hands, he came to Lludd his brother, to beseech his counsel and aid. And that not so much for his own welfare, as to seek to add to the glory and honour and dignity of his kindred, if he might go to France to woo the maiden for his wife. And forthwith his brother conferred with him, and this counsel was pleasing unto him.

So he prepared ships and filled them with armed knights, and set forth towards France. And as soon as they had landed, they sent messengers to show the nobles of France the cause of the embassy. And by the joint counsel of the nobles of France and of the princes, the maiden was given to Llevelys, and the crown of the kingdom with her. And thenceforth he ruled the land discreetly, and wisely, and happily, as long as his life lasted.

After a space of time had passed, three plagues fell on the Island of Britain, such as none in the islands had ever seen the like of. The first was a certain race that came, and was called the Coranians; and so great was their knowledge, that there was no discourse upon the face of the Island, however low it might be spoken, but what, if the wind met it, it was known to them. And through this they could not be injured.

The second plague was a shriek which came on every May-eve, over every hearth in the Island of Britain. And this went through people's hearts, and so scared them, that the men lost their hue and their strength, and the women their children, and the young men and the maidens lost their senses, and all the animals and trees and the earth and the waters, were left barren.

The third plague was, that however much of provisions and food might be prepared in the king's courts, were there even so much as a year's provision of meat and drink, none of it could ever be found, except what was consumed in the first night. And two of these plagues, no one ever knew their cause, therefore was there better hope of being freed from the first than from the second and third.

And thereupon King Lludd felt great sorrow and care, because that he knew not how he might be freed from these plagues. And he called to him all the nobles of his kingdom, and asked counsel of them what they should do against these afflictions. And by the common counsel of the nobles, Lludd the son of Beli went to Llevelys his brother, king of France, for he was a man great of counsel and wisdom, to seek his advice.

And they made ready a fleet, and that in secret and in silence, lest that race should know the cause of their errand, or any besides the king and his counsellors. And when they were made ready, they went into their ships, Lludd and those whom he chose with him. And they began to cleave the seas towards France.

And when these tidings came to Llevelys, seeing that he knew not the cause of his brother's ships, he came on the other side to meet him, and with him was a fleet vast of size. And when Lludd saw this, he left all the ships out upon the sea except one only; and in that one he came to meet his brother, and he likewise with a single ship came to meet him. And when they were come together, each put his arms about the other's neck, and they welcomed each other with brotherly love.

After that Lludd had shown his brother the cause of his errand, Llevelys said that he himself knew the cause of the coming to those lands. And they took counsel together to discourse on the matter otherwise than thus, in order that the wind might not catch their words, nor the Coranians know what they might say. Then Llevelys caused a long horn to be made of brass, and through this horn they discoursed. But whatsoever words they spoke through this horn, one to the other, neither of them could hear any other but harsh and hostile words. And when Llevelys saw this, and that there was a demon thwarting them and disturbing through this horn, he caused wine to be put therein to wash it. And through the virtue of the wine the demon was driven out of the horn. And when their discourse was unobstructed, Llevelys told his brother that he would give him some insects whereof he should keep some to breed, lest by chance the like affliction might come a second time. And other of these insects he should take and bruise in water. And he assured him that it would have power to destroy the race of the Coranians. That is to say, that when he came home to his kingdom he should call together all the people both of his own race and of the race of the Coranians for a conference, as though with the intent of making peace between them; and that when they were all together, he should take this charmed water, and cast it over all alike. And he assured him that the water would poison the race of the Coranians, but that it would not slay or harm those of his own race.

"And the second plague," said he, "that is in thy dominion, behold it is a dragon. And another dragon of a foreign race is fighting with it, and striving to overcome it. And therefore does your dragon make a fearful outcry. And on this wise mayest thou come to know this. After thou hast returned home, cause the Island to be measured in its length and breadth, and in the place where thou dost find the exact central point, there cause a pit to be dug, and cause a cauldron full of the best mead that can be made to be put in the pit, with a covering of satin over the face of the cauldron. And then, in thine own person do thou remain there watching, and thou wilt see the dragon fighting in the form of terrific animals. And at length they will take the form of dragons in the air. And last of all, after wearying themselves with fierce and furious fighting, they will fall in the form of two pigs upon the covering, and they will sink in, and the covering with them, and they will draw it down to the very bottom of the cauldron. And they will drink up the whole of the mead; and after that they will sleep. Thereupon do thou immediately fold the covering around them, and bury them in a kistvaen, in the strongest place thou hast in thy dominions, and hide them in the earth. And as long as they shall bide in that strong place no plague shall come to the Island of Britain from elsewhere.

"The cause of the third plague," said he, "is a mighty man of magic, who take thy meat and thy drink and thy store. And he through illusions and charms causes every one to sleep. Therefore it is needful for thee in thy own person to watch thy food and thy provisions. And lest he should overcome thee with sleep, be there a cauldron of cold water by thy side, and when thou art oppressed with sleep, plunge into the cauldron."

Then Lludd returned back unto his land. And immediately he summoned to him the whole of his own race and of the Coranians. And as Llevelys had taught him, he bruised the insects in water, the which he cast over them all together, and forthwith it destroyed the whole tribe of the Coranians, without hurt to any of the Britons.

And some time after this, Lludd caused the Island to be measured in its length and in its breadth. And in Oxford he found the central point, and in that place he caused the earth to be dug, and in that pit a cauldron to be set, full of the best mead that could be made, and a covering of satin over the face of it. And he him-

self watched that night. And while he was there, he beheld the dragons fighting. And when they were weary they fell, and came down upon the top of the satin, and drew it with them to the bottom of the cauldron. And when they had drunk the mead they slept. And in their sleep, Lludd folded the covering around them, and in the securest place he had in Snowdon, he hid them in a kistvaen. Now after that this spot was called Dinas Emreis, but before that, Dinas Ffaraon. And thus the fierce outcry ceased in his dominions.

And when this was ended, King Lludd caused an exceeding great banquet to be prepared. And when it was ready, he placed a vessel of cold water by his side, and he in his own proper person watched it. And as he abode thus clad with arms, about the third watch of the night, lo, he heard many surpassing fascinations and various songs. And drowsiness urged him to sleep. Upon this, lest he should be hindered from his purpose and be overcome by sleep, he went often into the water. And at last, behold, a man of vast size, clad in strong, heavy armour, came in, bearing a hamper. And, as he was wont, he put all the food and provisions of meat and drink into the hamper, and proceeded to go with it forth. And nothing was ever more wonderful to Lludd, than that the hamper should hold so much.

And thereupon King Lludd went after him and spoke unto him thus. "Stop, stop," said he, "though thou hast done many insults and much spoil erewhile, thou shalt not do so any more, unless thy skill in arms and thy prowess be greater than mine."

Then he instantly put down the hamper on the floor, and awaited him. And a fierce encounter was between them, so that the glittering fire flew out from their arms. And at the last Lludd grappled with him, and fate bestowed the victory on Lludd. And he threw the plague to the earth. And after he had overcome him by strength and might, he besought his mercy. "How can I grant thee mercy," said the king, "after all the many injuries and wrongs that thou hast done me?" "All the losses that ever I have caused thee," said he, "I will make thee atonement for, equal to what I have taken. And I will never do the like from this time forth. But thy faithful vassal will I be." And the king accepted this from him.

And thus Lludd freed the Island of Britain from the three plagues. And from thenceforth until the end of his life, in prosperous peace did Lludd the son of Beli rule the Island of Britain. And this Tale is called the Story of Lludd and Llevelys. And thus it ends.

TALIESIN

In times past there lived in Penllyn a man of gentle lineage, named Tegid Voel, and his dwelling was in the midst of the lake Tegid, and his wife was called Caridwen. And there was born to him of his wife a son named Morvran ab Tegid, and also a daughter named Creirwy, the fairest maiden in the world was she; and they had a brother, the most ill-favoured man in the world, Avagddu. Now Caridwen his mother thought that he was not likely to be admitted among men of noble birth, by reason of his ugliness, unless he had some exalted merits or knowledge. For it was in the beginning of Arthur's time and of the Round Table.

So she resolved, according to the arts of the books of the Fferyllt, to boil a cauldron of Inspiration and Science for her son, that his reception might be honourable because of his knowledge of the mysteries of the future state of the world.

Then she began to boil the cauldron, which from the beginning of its boiling might not cease to boil for a year and a day, until three blessed drops were obtained of the grace of Inspiration.

And she put Gwion Bach the son of Gwreang of Llanfair in Caereinion, in Powys, to stir the cauldron, and a blind man named Morda to kindle the fire beneath it, and she charged them that they should not suffer it to cease boiling for the space of a year and a day. And she herself, according to the books of the astronomers, and in planetary hours, gathered every day of all charm-bearing herbs. And one day, towards the end of the year, as Caridwen was culling plants and making incantations, it chanced that three drops of the charmed liquor flew out of the cauldron and fell upon the finger of Gwion Bach. And by reason of their great heat he put his finger to his mouth, and the instant he put those marvel-

working drops into his mouth, he foresaw everything that was to come, and perceived that his chief care must be to guard against the wiles of Caridwen, for vast was her skill. And in very great fear he fled towards his own land. And the cauldron burst in two, because all the liquor within it except the three charm-bearing drops was poisonous, so that the horses of Gwyddno Garanhir were poisoned by the water of the stream into which the liquor of the cauldron ran, and the confluence of that stream was called the Poison of the Horses of Gwyddno from that time forth.

Thereupon came in Caridwen and saw all the toil of the whole year lost. And she seized a billet of wood and struck the blind Morda on the head until one of his eyes fell out upon his cheek. And he said, "Wrongfully hast thou disfigured me, for I am innocent. Thy loss was not because of me." "Thou speakest truth," said Caridwen, "it was Gwion Bach who robbed me."

And she went forth after him, running. And he saw her, and changed himself into a hare and fled. But she changed herself into a greyhound and turned him. And he ran towards a river, and became a fish. And she in the form of an otter-bitch chased him under the water, until he was fain to turn himself into a bird of the air. She, as a hawk, followed him and gave him no rest in the sky. And just as she was about to stoop upon him, and he was in fear of death, he espied a heap of winnowed wheat on the floor of a barn, and he dropped among the wheat, and turned himself into one of the grains. Then she transformed herself into a high-crested black hen, and went to the wheat and scratched it with her feet, and found him out and swallowed him. And, as the story says, she bore him nine months, and when she was delivered of him, she could not find it in her heart to kill him, by reason of his beauty. So she wrapped him in a leathern bag, and cast him into the sea to the mercy of God, on the twenty-ninth day of April.

And at that time the weir of Gwyddno was on the strand between Dyvi and Aberystwyth, near to his own castle, and the value of an hundred pounds was taken in that weir every May eve. And in those days Gwyddno had an only son named Elphin, the most hapless of youths, and the most needy. And it grieved his father sore, for he thought that he was born in an evil hour. And by the advice of his council, his father had granted him the drawing of the weir that year, to see if good luck would ever befall him, and to give him something wherewith to begin the world.

And the next day when Elphin went to look, there was nothing in the weir. But as he turned back he perceived the leathern bag upon a pole of the weir. Then said one of the weir-ward unto Elphin, "Thou wast never unlucky until to-night, and now thou hast destroyed the virtues of the weir, which always yielded the value of an hundred pounds every May eve, and to-night there is nothing but this leathern skin within it." "How now," said Elphin, "there may be therein the value of an hundred pounds." Well, they took up the leathern bag, and he who opened it saw the forehead of the boy, and said to Elphin, "Behold a radiant brow!" "Taliesin be he called," said Elphin. And he lifted the boy in his arms, and lamenting his mischance, he placed him sorrowfully behind him. And he made his horse amble gently, that before had been trotting, and he carried him as softly as if he had been sitting in the easiest chair in the world. And presently the boy made a Consolation and praise to Elphin, and foretold honour to Elphin; and the Consolation was as you may see:—

"Fair Elphin, cease to lament!
Let no one be dissatisfied with his own,
To despair will bring no advantage.
No man sees what supports him;
The prayer of Cynllo will not be in vain;
God will not violate his promise.
Never in Gwyddno's weir
Was there such good luck as this night.
Fair Elphin, dry thy cheeks!
Being too sad will not avail.
Although thou thinkest thou hast no gain,
Too much grief will bring thee no good;
Nor doubt the miracles of the Almighty:
Although I am but little, I am highly gifted.
From seas, and from mountains,
And from the depths of rivers,
God brings wealth to the fortunate man.
Elphin of lively qualities,
Thy resolution is unmanly;
Thou must not be over sorrowful:

Better to trust in God than to forbode ill.
Weak and small as I am,
On the foaming beach of the ocean,
In the day of trouble I shall be
Of more service to thee than three hundred salmon.
Elphin of notable qualities,
Be not displeased at thy misfortune;
Although reclined thus weak in my bag,
There lies a virtue in my tongue.
While I continue thy protector
Thou hast not much to fear;
Remembering the names of the Trinity,
None shall be able to harm thee."

And this was the first poem that Taliesin ever sang, being to console Elphin in his grief for that the produce of the weir was lost, and, what was worse, that all the world would consider that it was through his fault and ill-luck. And then Gwyddno Garanhir asked him what he was, whether man or spirit. Whereupon he sang this tale, and said:—

"First, I have been formed a comely person,
In the court of Caridwen I have done penance;
Though little I was seen, placidly received,
I was great on the floor of the place to where I was led;
I have been a prized defence, the sweet muse the cause,
And by law without speech I have been liberated
By a smiling black old hag, when irritated
Dreadful her claim when pursued:
I have fled with vigour, I have fled as a frog,
I have fled in the semblance of a crow, scarcely finding rest;
I have fled vehemently, I have fled as a chain,
I have fled as a roe into an entangled thicket;
I have fled as a wolf cub, I have fled as a wolf in a wilderness,
I have fled as a thrush of portending language;
I have fled as a fox, used to concurrent bounds of quirks;
I have fled as a martin, which did not avail;
I have fled as a squirrel, that vainly hides,
I have fled as a stag's antler, of ruddy course,
I have fled as iron in a glowing fire,
I have fled as a spear-head, of woe to such as has a wish for it;
I have fled as a fierce hull bitterly fighting,
I have fled as a bristly boar seen in a ravine,
I have fled as a white grain of pure wheat,
On the skirt of a hempen sheet entangled,
That seemed of the size of a mare's foal,
That is filling like a ship on the waters;
Into a dark leathern bag I was thrown,
And on a boundless sea I was sent adrift;
Which was to me an omen of being tenderly nursed,
And the Lord God then set me at liberty."

Then came Elphin to the house or court of Gwyddno his father, and Taliesin with him. And Gwyddno asked him if he had had a good haul at the weir, and he told him that he had got that which was better than fish. "What was that?" said Gwyddno. "A Bard," answered Elphin. Then said Gwyddno, "Alas, what will he profit thee?" And Taliesin himself replied and said, "He will profit him more than the weir ever profited thee." Asked Gwyddno, "Art thou able to speak, and thou so little?" And Taliesin answered him, "I am better able to speak than thou to question me." "Let me hear what thou canst say," quoth Gwyddno. Then Taliesin sang:—

"In water there is a quality endowed with a blessing;
On God it is most just to meditate aright;
To God it is proper to supplicate with seriousness,
Since no obstacle can there be to obtain a reward from him.
Three times have I been born, I know by meditation;
It were miserable for a person not to come and obtain
All the sciences of the world, collected together in my breast,
For I know what has been, what in future will occur.
I will supplicate my Lord that I get refuge in him,
A regard I may obtain in his grace;
The Son of Mary is my trust, great in him is my delight,
For in him is the world continually uphelden.
God has been to instruct me and to raise my expectation,
The true Creator of heaven, who affords me protection;
It is rightly intended that the saints should daily pray,
For God, the renovator, will bring them to him."

And forthwith Elphin gave his haul to his wife, and she nursed him tenderly and lovingly. Thenceforward Elphin increased in riches more and more day after day, and in love and favour with the king, and there abode Taliesin until he was thirteen years old, when Elphin son of Gwyddno went by a Christmas invitation to his uncle, Maelgwn Gwynedd, who some time after this held open court at Christmastide in the castle of Dyganwy, for all the number

of his lords of both degrees, both spiritual and temporal, with a vast and thronged host of knights and squires. And amongst them there arose a discourse and discussion. And thus was it said.

"Is there in the whole world a king so great as Maelgwn, or one on whom Heaven has bestowed so many spiritual gifts as upon him? First, form, and beauty, and meekness, and strength, besides all the powers of the soul!" And together with these they said that Heaven had given one gift that exceeded all the others, which was the beauty, and comeliness, and grace, and wisdom, and modesty of his queen; whose virtues surpassed those of all the ladies and noble maidens throughout the whole kingdom. And with this they put questions one to another amongst themselves: Who had braver men? Who had fairer or swifter horses or greyhounds? Who had more skilful or wiser bards—than Maelgwn?

Now at that time the bards were in great favour with the exalted of the kingdom; and then none performed the office of those who are now called heralds, unless they were learned men, not only expert in the service of kings and princes, but studious and well versed in the lineage, and arms, and exploits of princes and kings, and in discussions concerning foreign kingdoms, and the ancient things of this kingdom, and chiefly in the annals of the first nobles; and also were prepared always with their answers in various languages, Latin, French, Welsh, and English. And together with this they were great chroniclers, and recorders, and skilful in framing verses, and ready in making englyns in every one of those languages. Now of these there were at that feast within the palace of Maelgwn as many as four-and-twenty, and chief of them all was one named Heinin Vardd.

When they had all made an end of thus praising the king and his gifts, it befell that Elphin spoke in this wise. "Of a truth none but a king may vie with a king; but were he not a king, I would say that my wife was as virtuous as any lady in the kingdom, and also that I have a bard who is more skilful than all the king's bards." In a short space some of his fellows showed the king all the boastings of Elphin; and the king ordered him to be thrown into a strong prison, until he might know the truth as to the virtues of his wife, and the wisdom of his bard.

Now when Elphin had been put in a tower of the castle, with a thick chain about his feet (it is said that it was a silver chain, because he was of royal blood), the king, as the story relates, sent his son Rhun to inquire into the demeanour of Elphin's wife. Now Rhun was the most graceless man in the world, and there was neither wife nor maiden with whom he had held converse, but was evil spoken of. While Rhun went in haste towards Elphin's dwelling, being fully minded to bring disgrace upon his wife, Taliesin told his mistress how that the king had placed his master in durance in prison, and how that Rhun was coming in haste to strive to bring disgrace upon her. Wherefore he caused his mistress to array one of the maids of her kitchen in her apparel; which the noble lady gladly did; and she loaded her hands with the best rings that she and her husband possessed.

In this guise Taliesin caused his mistress to put the maiden to sit at the board in her room at supper, and he made her to seem as her mistress, and the mistress to seem as the maid. And when they were in due time seated at their supper in the manner that has been said, Rhun suddenly arrived at Elphin's dwelling, and was received with joy, for all the servants knew him plainly; and they brought him in haste to the room of their mistress, in the semblance of whom the maid rose up from supper and welcomed him gladly. And afterwards she sat down to supper again the second time, and Rhun with her. Then Rhun began jesting with the maid, who still kept the semblance of her mistress. And verily this story shows that the maiden became so intoxicated, that she fell asleep; and the story relates that it was a powder that Rhun put into the drink, that made her sleep so soundly that she never felt it when he cut from off her hand her little finger, whereupon was the signet ring of Elphin, which he had sent to his wife as a token, a short time before. And Rhun returned to the king with the finger and the ring as a proof, to show that he had cut it from off her hand, without her awaking from her sleep of intemperance.

The king rejoiced greatly at these tidings, and he sent for his councillors, to whom he told the whole story from the beginning. And he caused Elphin to be brought out of his prison, and

he chided him because of his boast. And he spake unto Elphin on this wise. "Elphin, be it known to thee beyond a doubt that it is but folly for a man to trust in the virtues of his wife further than he can see her; and that thou mayest be certain of thy wife's villainess, behold her finger, with thy signet ring upon it, which was cut from her hand last night, while she slept the sleep of intoxication." Then thus spake Elphin. "With thy leave, mighty king, I cannot deny my ring, for it is known of many; but verily I assert strongly that the finger around which it is, was never attached to the hand of my wife, for in truth and certainty there are three notable things pertaining to it, none of which ever belonged to any of my wife's fingers. The first of the three is, that it is certain, by your grace's leave, that wheresoever my wife is at this present hour, whether sitting, or standing, or lying down, this ring would never remain upon her thumb, whereas you can plainly see that it was hard to draw it over the joint of the little finger of the hand whence this was cut; the second thing is, that my wife has never let pass one Saturday since I have known her without paring her nails before going to bed, and you can see fully that the nail of this little finger has not been pared for a month. The third is, truly, that the hand whence this finger came was kneading rye dough within three days before the finger was cut therefrom, and I can assure your goodness that my wife has never kneaded rye dough since my wife she has been."

Then the king was mightily wroth with Elphin for so stoutly withstanding him, respecting the goodness of his wife, wherefore he ordered him to his prison a second time, saying that he should not be loosed thence until he had proved the truth of his boast, as well concerning the wisdom of his bard as the virtues of his wife.

In the meantime his wife and Taliesin remained joyful at Elphin's dwelling. And Taliesin showed his mistress how that Elphin was in prison because of them, but he bade her be glad, for that he would go to Maelgwn's court to free his master. Then she asked him in what manner he would set him free. And he answered her:—

"A journey will I perform,
And to the gate I will come;
The hall I will enter,
And my song I will sing;
My speech I will pronounce
To silence royal bards,
In presence of their chief,
I will greet to deride,
Upon them I will break
And Elphin I will free.
Should contention arise,
In presence of the prince,
With summons to the bards,
For the sweet flowing song,
And wizards' posing lore
And wisdom of Druids,
In the court of the sons of the Distributor
Some are who did appear
Intent on wily schemes,
By craft and tricking means,
In pangs of affliction
To wrong the innocent,
Let the fools be silent,
As erst in Badon's fight,—
With Arthur of liberal ones
The head, with long red blades;
Through feats of testy men,
And a chief with his foes.
Woe be to them, the fools,
When revenge comes on them.
I Taliesin, chief of bards,
With a sapient Druid's words,
Will set kind Elphin free
From haughty tyrant's bonds.
To their fell and chilling cry,
By the act of a surprising deed,
From the far distant North,
There soon shall be an end.
Let neither grace nor health
Be to Maelgwn Gwynedd,
For this force and this wrong;
And be extremes of ills
And an avenged end
To Rhun and all his race:
Short be his course of life,
Be all his lands laid waste;
And long exile be assigned
To Maelgwn Gwynedd!"

After this he took leave of his mistress, and came at last to the Court of Maelgwn, who was going to sit in his hall and dine in his royal state, as it was the custom in those days for kings and princes to do at every chief feast. And as soon as Taliesin entered the hall, he placed himself in a quiet corner, near the place where the bards and the minstrels were wont to come in doing their service and duty to the king, as is the custom at the high festivals when the bounty is proclaimed. And so, when the bards and the heralds came to cry largess, and to proclaim the power of the king and his strength, at the moment that they passed by the corner wherein he was crouching, Taliesin pouted out his lips after them, and played “Blerwm, blerwm,” with his finger upon his lips. Neither took they much notice of him as they went by, but proceeded forward till they came before the king, unto whom they made their obeisance with their bodies, as they were wont, without speaking a single word, but pouting out their lips, and making mouths at the king, playing “Blerwm, blerwm,” upon their lips with their fingers, as they had seen the boy do elsewhere. This sight caused the king to wonder and to deem within himself that they were drunk with many liquors. Wherefore he commanded one of his lords, who served at the board, to go to them and desire them to collect their wits, and to consider where they stood, and what it was fitting for them to do. And this lord did so gladly. But they ceased not from their folly any more than before. Whereupon he sent to them a second time, and a third, desiring them to go forth from the hall. At the last the king ordered one of his squires to give a blow to the chief of them named Heinin Vardd; and the squire took a broom and struck him on the head, so that he fell back in his seat. Then he arose and went on his knees, and besought leave of the king’s grace to show that this their fault was not through want of knowledge, neither through drunkenness, but by the influence of some spirit that was in the hall. And after this Heinin spoke on this wise. “Oh, honourable king, be it known to your grace, that not from the strength of drink, or of too much liquor, are we dumb, without power of speech like drunken men, but through the influence of a spirit that sits in the corner yonder in the form of a child.” Forthwith the king commanded the squire to fetch him; and he went to the nook where Taliesin sat, and brought him before the king, who asked him what he was, and whence he came. And he answered the king in verse.

“Primary chief bard am I to Elphin,
And my original country is the region of the summer stars;
Idno and Heinin called me Merddin,
At length every king will call me Taliesin.

I was with my Lord in the highest sphere,
On the fall of Lucifer into the depth of hell
I have borne a banner before Alexander;
I know the names of the stars from north to south;
I have been on the galaxy at the throne of the Distributor;
I was in Canaan when Absalom was slain;
I conveyed the Divine Spirit to the level of the vale of Hebron;
I was in the court of Don before the birth of Gwion.
I was instructor to Eli and Enoch;
I have been winged by the genius of the splendid crosier;
I have been loquacious prior to being gifted with speech;
I was at the place of the crucifixion of the merciful Son of God;
I have been three periods in the prison of Arianrod;
I have been the chief director of the work of the tower of Nimrod;
I am a wonder whose origin is not known.
I have been in Asia with Noah in the ark,
I have seen the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra;
I have been in India when Roma was built,
I am now come here to the remnant of Troia.

I have been with my Lord in the manger of the ass;
I strengthened Moses through the water of Jordan;
I have been in the firmament with Mary Magdalene;
I have obtained the muse from the cauldron of Caridwen;
I have been bard of the harp to Leon of Lochlin.
I have been on the White Hill, in the court of Cynvelyn,
For a day and a year in stocks and fetters,
I have suffered hunger for the Son of the Virgin,
I have been fostered in the land of the Deity,
I have been teacher to all intelligences,
I am able to instruct the whole universe.
I shall be until the day of doom on the face of the earth;
And it is not known whether my body is flesh or fish.

Then I was for nine months
In the womb of the hag Caridwen;

I was originally little Gwion,
And at length I am Taliesin.”

And when the king and his nobles had heard the song, they wondered much, for they had never heard the like from a boy so young as he. And when the king knew that he was the bard of Elphin, he bade Heinin, his first and wisest bard, to answer Taliesin and to strive with him. But when he came, he could do no other but play “blerwm” on his lips; and when he sent for the others of the four-and-twenty bards they all did likewise, and could do no other. And Maelgwn asked the boy Taliesin what was his errand, and he answered him in song.

“Puny bards, I am trying
To secure the prize, if I can;
By a gentle prophetic strain
I am endeavouring to retrieve
The loss I may have suffered;
Complete the attempt I hope,
Since Elphin endures trouble
In the fortress of Teganwy,
On him may there not be laid
Too many chains and fetters;
The Chair of the fortress of Teganwy
Will I again seek;
Strengthened by my muse I am powerful;
Mighty on my part is what I seek,
For three hundred songs and more
Are combined in the spell I sing.
There ought not to stand where I am
Neither stone, neither ring;
And there ought not to be about me
Any bard who may not know
That Elphin the son of Gwyddno
Is in the land of Arthro,
Secured by thirteen locks,
For praising his instructor;
And then I Taliesin,
Chief of the bards of the west,
Shall loosen Elphin
Out of a golden fetter.”
* * * *

“If you be primary bards
To the master of sciences,
Declare ye mysteries
That relate to the inhabitants of the world;
There is a noxious creature,
From the rampart of Satanas,
Which has overcome all
Between the deep and the shallow;
Equally wide are his jaws
As the mountains of the Alps;
Him death will not subdue,
Nor hand or blades;
There is the load of nine hundred wagons
In the hair of his two paws;
There is in his head an eye
Green as the limpid sheet of icicle;
Three springs arise
In the nape of his neck;
Sea-roughs thereon
Swim through it;
There was the dissolution of the oxen
Of Deivrdonwy the water-gifted.
The names of the three springs
From the midst of the ocean;
One generated brine
Which is from the Corina,
To replenish the flood
Over seas disappearing;
The second, without injury
It will fall on us,
When there is rain abroad,
Through the whelming sky;
The third will appear
Through the mountain veins,
Like a flinty banquet,
The work of the King of kings,
You are blundering bards,
In too much solicitude;
You cannot celebrate
The kingdom of the Britons;
And I am Taliesin,
Chief of the bards of the west,
Who will loosen Elphin
Out of the golden fetter.”
* * * *

“Be silent, then, ye unlucky rhyming bards,
For you cannot judge between truth and falsehood.
If you be primary bards formed by heaven,

Tell your king what his fate will be.
 It is I who am a diviner and a leading bard,
 And know every passage in the country of your king;
 I shall liberate Elphin from the belly of the stony tower;
 And will tell your king what will befall him.
 A most strange creature will come from the sea marsh of Rhianedd
 As a punishment of iniquity on Maelgwn Gwynedd;
 His hair, his teeth, and his eyes being as gold,
 And this will bring destruction upon Maelgwn Gwynedd."

* * * * *

"Discover thou what is
 The strong creature from before the flood,
 Without flesh, without bone,
 Without vein, without blood,
 Without head, without feet,
 It will neither be older nor younger
 Than at the beginning;
 For fear of a denial,
 There are no rude wants
 With creatures.
 Great God! how the sea whitens
 When first it comes!
 Great are its gusts
 When it comes from the south;
 Great are its evaporations
 When it strikes on coasts.
 It is in the field, it is in the wood,
 Without hand, and without foot,
 Without signs of old age,
 Though it be co-æval
 With the five ages or periods
 And older still,
 Though they be numberless years.
 It is also so wide
 As the surface of the earth;
 And it was not born,
 Nor was it seen.
 It will cause consternation
 Wherever God willeth.
 On sea, and on land,
 It neither sees, nor is seen.
 Its course is devious,
 And will not come when desired;
 On land and on sea,
 It is indispensable.
 It is without an equal,
 It is four-sided;
 It is not confined,
 It is incomparable;
 It comes from four quarters;
 It will not be advised,
 It will not be without advice.
 It commences its journey
 Above the marble rock,
 It is sonorous, it is dumb,
 It is mild,
 It is strong, it is bold,
 When it glances over the land,
 It is silent, it is vocal,
 It is clamorous,
 It is the most noisy
 On the face of the earth.
 It is good, it is bad,
 It is extremely injurious.
 It is concealed,
 Because sight cannot perceive it.
 It is noxious, it is beneficial;
 It is yonder, it is here;
 It will discompose,
 But will not repair the injury;
 It will not suffer for its doings,
 Seeing it is blameless.
 It is wet, it is dry,
 It frequently comes,
 Proceeding from the heat of the sun,
 And the coldness of the moon.
 The moon is less beneficial,
 Inasmuch as her heat is less.
 One Being has prepared it,
 Out of all creatures,
 By a tremendous blast,
 To wreak vengeance
 On Maelgwn Gwynedd."

And while he was thus singing his verse near the door, there arose a mighty storm of wind, so that the king and all his nobles thought that the castle would fall on their heads. And the king caused them to fetch Elphin in haste from his dungeon, and placed him before Taliesin. And it is said, that immediately he sang a verse, so that the chains opened from about his feet.

"I adore the Supreme, Lord of all animation,—

Him that supports the heavens, Ruler of every extreme,
 Him that made the water good for all,
 Him who has bestowed each gift, and blesses it;—
 May abundance of mead be given Maelgwn of Anglesey, who supplies us,
 From his foaming mead-horns, with the choicest pure liquor.
 Since bees collect, and do not enjoy,
 We have sparkling distilled mead, which is universally praised.
 The multitude of creatures which the earth nourishes
 God made for man, with a view to enrich him;—
 Some are violent, some are mute, he enjoys them,
 Some are wild, some are tame; the Lord makes them;—
 Part of their produce becomes clothing;
 For food and beverage till doom will they continue.
 I entreat the Supreme, Sovereign of the region of peace,
 To liberate Elphin from banishment,
 The man who gave me wine, and ale, and mead,
 With large princely steeds, of beautiful appearance;
 May he yet give me; and at the end,
 May God of his good will grant me, in honour,
 A succession of numberless ages, in the retreat of tranquillity.
 Elphin, knight of mead, late be thy dissolution!"

And afterwards he sang the ode which is called "The Excellence of the Bards."

"What was the first man
 Made by the God of heaven;
 What the fairest flattering speech
 That was prepared by leuav;
 What meat, what drink,
 What roof his shelter;
 What the first impression
 Of his primary thinking;
 What became his clothing;
 Who carried on a disguise,
 Owing to the wilds of the country,
 In the beginning?
 Wherefore should a stone be hard;
 Why should a thorn be sharp-pointed?
 Who is hard like a flint;
 Who is salt like brine;
 Who sweet like honey;
 Who rides on the gale;
 Why ridged should be the nose;
 Why should a wheel be round;
 Why should the tongue be gifted with speech
 Rather than another member?
 If thy bards, Heinin, be competent,
 Let them reply to me, Taliesin."

And after that he sang the address which is called "The Reproof of the Bards."

"If thou art a bard completely imbued
 With genius not to be controlled,
 Be thou not untractable
 Within the court of thy king;
 Until thy rigmarole shall be known,
 Be thou silent, Heinin,
 As to the name of thy verse,
 And the name of thy vaunting;
 And as to the name of thy grandsire
 Prior to his being baptized.
 And the name of the sphere,
 And the name of the element,
 And the name of thy language,
 And the name of thy region.
 Avaunt, ye bards above,
 Avaunt, ye bards below!
 My beloved is below,
 In the fetter of Ariansod
 It is certain you know not
 How to understand the song I utter,
 Nor clearly how to discriminate
 Between the truth and what is false;
 Puny bards, crows of the district,
 Why do you not take to flight?
 A bard that will not silence me,
 Silence may he not obtain,
 Till he goes to be covered
 Under gravel and pebbles;
 Such as shall listen to me,
 May God listen to him."

Then sang he the piece called "The Spite of the Bards."

"Minstrels persevere in their false custom,
 Immoral ditties are their delight;
 Vain and tasteless praise they recite;
 Falsehood at all times do they utter;
 The innocent persons they ridicule;
 Married women they destroy,
 Innocent virgins of Mary they corrupt;

As they pass their lives away in vanity,
 Poor innocent persons they ridicule;
 At night they get drunk, they sleep the day;
 In idleness without work they feed themselves;
 The Church they hate, and the tavern they frequent;
 With thieves and perjured fellows they associate;
 At courts they inquire after feasts;
 Every senseless word they bring forward;
 Every deadly sin they praise;
 Every vile course of life they lead;
 Through every village, town, and country they stroll;
 Concerning the gripe of death they think not;
 Neither lodging nor charity do they give;
 Indulging in victuals to excess.
 Psalms or prayers they do not use,
 Tithes or offerings to God they do not pay,
 On holidays or Sundays they do not worship;
 Vigils or festivals they do not heed.
 The birds do fly, the fish do swim,
 The bees collect honey, worms do crawl,
 Every thing travails to obtain its food,
 Except minstrels and lazy useless thieves.

I deride neither song nor minstrelsy,
 For they are given by God to lighten thought;
 But him who abuses them,
 For blaspheming Jesus and his service."

Taliesin having set his master free from prison, and having protected the innocence of his wife, and silenced the Bards, so that not one of them dared to say a word, now brought Elphin's wife before them, and showed that she had not one finger wanting. Right glad was Elphin, right glad was Taliesin.

Then he bade Elphin wager the king, that he had a horse both better and swifter than the king's horses. And this Elphin did, and the day, and the time, and the place were fixed, and the place was that which at this day is called Morva Rhiannedd: and thither the king went with all his people, and four-and-twenty of the swiftest horses he possessed. And after a long process the course was marked, and the horses were placed for running. Then came Taliesin with four-and-twenty twigs of holly, which he had burnt black, and he caused the youth who was to ride his master's horse to place them in his belt, and he gave him orders to let all the king's horses get before him, and as he should overtake one horse after the other, to take one of the twigs and strike the horse with it over the crupper, and then let that twig fall; and after that to take another twig, and do in like manner to every one of the horses, as he should overtake them, enjoining the horseman strictly to watch when his own horse should stumble, and to throw down his cap on the spot. All these things did the youth fulfil, giving a blow to every one of the king's horses, and throwing down his cap on the spot where his horse stumbled. And to this spot Taliesin brought his master after his horse had won the race. And he caused Elphin to put workmen to dig a hole there; and when they had dug the ground deep enough, they found a large cauldron full of gold. And then said Taliesin, "Elphin, behold a payment and reward unto thee, for having taken me out of the weir, and for having reared me from that time until now." And on this spot stands a pool of water, which is to this time called Pwllbair.

After all this, the king caused Taliesin to be brought before him, and he asked him to recite concerning the creation of man from the beginning; and thereupon he made the poem which is now called "One of the Four Pillars of Song."

"The Almighty made,
 Down the Hebron vale,
 With his plastic hands,
 Adam's fair form:
 And five hundred years,
 Void of any help,
 There he remained and lay
 Without a soul.
 He again did form,
 In calm paradise,
 From a left-side rib,
 Bliss-throbbing Eve.
 Seven hours they were
 The orchard keeping,
 Till Satan brought strife,
 With wiles from hell.
 Thence were they driven,
 Cold and shivering,

To gain their living,
 Into this world.
 To bring forth with pain
 Their sons and daughters,
 To have possession
 Of Asia's land.
 Twice five, ten and eight,
 She was self-bearing,
 The mixed burden
 Of man-woman.
 And once, not hidden,
 She brought forth Abel,
 And Cain the forlorn,
 The homicide.
 To him and his mate
 Was given a spade,
 To break up the soil,
 Thus to get bread.
 The wheat pure and white,
 Summer tilth to sow,
 Every man to feed,
 Till great yule feast.
 An angelic hand
 From the high Father,
 Brought seed for growing
 That Eve might sow;
 But she then did hide
 Of the gift a tenth,
 And all did not sow
 Of what was dug.
 Black rye then was found,
 And not pure wheat grain,
 To show the mischief
 Thus of thieving.
 For this thievish act,
 It is requisite,
 That all men should pay
 Tithe unto God.
 Of the ruddy wine,
 Planted on sunny days,
 And on new-moon nights;
 And the white wine.
 The wheat rich in grain
 And red flowing wine
 Christ's pure body make,
 Son of Alpha.
 The wafer is flesh,
 The wine is spilt blood,
 The Trinity's words
 Sanctify them.
 The concealed books
 From Emmanuel's hand
 Were brought by Raphael
 As Adam's gift,
 When in his old age,
 To his chin immersed
 In Jordan's water,
 Keeping a fast,
 Moses did obtain
 In Jordan's water,
 The aid of the three
 Most special rods.
 Solomon did obtain
 In Babel's tower,
 All the sciences
 In Asia land.
 So did I obtain,
 In my bardic books,
 All the sciences
 Of Europe and Africa.
 Their course, their bearing,
 Their permitted way,
 And their fate I know,
 Unto the end.
 Oh! what misery,
 Through extreme of woe,
 Prophecy will show
 On Troia's race!
 A coiling serpent
 Proud and merciless,
 On her golden wings,
 From Germany.
 She will overrun
 England and Scotland,
 From Lychlyn sea-shore
 To the Severn.
 Then will the Brython
 Be as prisoners,

By strangers swayed,
From Saxony.
Their Lord they will praise,
Their speech they will keep,
Their land they will lose,
Except wild Walia.
Till some change shall come,
After long penance,
When equally rife
The two crimes come.
Britons then shall have
Their land and their crown,
And the stranger swarm
Shall disappear.
All the angel's words,
As to peace and war,
Will be fulfilled
To Britain's race."

He further told the king various prophecies of things that
should be in the world, in songs, as follows.

* * * * *

[Manuscript ends.]

Layamon: Brut

At Totnes Constantin the fair and all his host came ashore; thither came the bold man—well was he brave!—and with him two thousand knights such as no king possessed. Forth they gan march into London, and sent after knights over all the kingdom, and every brave man, that speedily he should come anon.

The Britons heard that, where they dwelt in the pits; in earth and in stocks they hid them like badgers, in wood and in wilderness, in heath and in fen, so that well nigh no man might find any Briton, except they were in castle, or in burgh inclosed fast. When they heard of this word, that Constantin was in the land, then came out of the mountains many thousand men; they leapt out of the wood as if it were deer. Many hundred thousand marched toward London, by street and by weald all it forth pressed; and the brave women put on them men's clothes, and they forth journeyed toward the army.

When the Earl Constantin saw all this folk come to him, then he was so blithe as he was never before in life. Forth they took their way two nights and a day, so that they came full truly to Melga and Wanis. Together they rushed with stern strength, fought fiercely—the fated fell! Ere the day were gone, slain was Wanis and Melgan, and Peohetes enow, and Scots without number, Danes and Norwegians, Galloways and Irish. The while that the day was light lasted ever this slaughter.

When it came to the eventime, then called the Earl Constantin, and bade that guides should ride to the waters, and active men toward the sea, for to guard them. A man should have seen the game, how the women forth marched over woods and over fields, over hills and over dales. Wheresoever they found any man escaped, that was with Melga the heathen king, the women loud laughed, and tore him all in pieces, and prayed for the soul, that never should good be to it. Thus the British women killed many thousands, and thus they freed this kingdom of Wanis and of Melga.

And Constantin the brave marched to Silchester, and held there his husting of all his British thanes, all the Britons came to the meeting, and took Constantin the noble, and made him king of Britain—much was then the mirth that was among men. And afterwards they gave him a wife, one wondrous fair, born of the highest, of Britain the best of all. By this noble wife Constantin had in this land three little sons. The first son had well nigh his father's name; Constantin hight the king, Constance hight the child. When this child was waxed, that it could ride, then his father caused him to be made a monk, through counsel of wicked men, and the child was a monk in Winchester. After him was born another, who was the middle brother, he was named Aurelius, his surname hight Ambrosius. Then was last of all born a child that was well disposed, he was named Uther, his virtues were strong; he was the youngest brother, but he lived longer than the others.

Guencelm the archbishop, who toward God was full good, took charge of the two children, for love of the king. But alas! that their father might live no longer!—for he had good laws the while that he lived; but he was king here but twelve years, and then was the king dead—hearken now through what chance. He had in his house a Peoht, fair knight and most brave; he fared with the king, and with all his thanes by no other wise but as it were his brother. Then became he so potent, to all his companions unlike; then thought he to betray Constantin the powerful. He came before the king, and fell on his knees, and thus lied the traitor before his lord: "Lord king, come forthright, and speak with Cadal thy

knight, and I will thee tell of strange speeches, such as thou never ere on earth heardest."

Then arose the king Constantin, and went forth out with him. But alas! that Constantin's knights knew it not! They proceeded so long forward that they came in an orchard. Then said the traitor there: "Lord, be we here." The traitor sat down, as if he would hold secret discourse, and he approached to the king, as a man doth in whispering. He grasped a knife very long, and the king therewith he pierced into the heart; and he himself escaped—there the king dead lay, and the traitor fled away.

The tidings came to court, how the king had fared; then was mickle sorrow spread to the folk. Then were the Britons busy in thought, they knew not through anything what they might have for king, for the king's two sons, little they were both. Ambrosie could scarcely ride on horse, and Uther, his brother, yet still sucked his mother; and Constance the eldest was monk in Winchester; monk's clothes he had on, as one of his companions. Then came to London all this landfolk, to their husting, and to advise them of a king, what wise they might do, and how they might take on, and which one of these children they might have for king. Then chose this people Aurelie Ambrosie, to have for king over them.

That heard Vortiger, a crafty man and most wary; among the earls he stood, and firmly withstood it, and he thus said—sooth though it were not: "I will advise you counsel with the best; abide a fortnight, and come we eft right here, and I will say to you sooth words, so that with your eyes ye shall see, and your while well bestow; this same time we shall abide, and to our land the while ride, and hold amity and hold peace, freely in land."

All the folk did as Vortiger deemed; and he himself went as if he would go to his land, and turned right the way that into Winchester lay. Vortiger had Welshland the half-part in his hand; forty knights good he had in his retinue. He proceeded to Winchester, where he found Constance, and spake with the abbot who governed the monastery where Constance was monk, the king's son of Britain. He went into the monastery with mild speech; he said that he would speak with Constance. The abbot granted it to him, and he led him to the speech-house. Thus spake Vortiger with the monk then there: "Constance, hearken my counsel, for now is thy father dead. There is Ambrosie thy brother, and Uther the other. Now have the elders, the noblest in land, chosen Aurelie—his surname is Ambrosie—if they may through all things they will make him king; and Uther, thy brother, yet sucketh his mother. But I have opposed them, and think to withsay, for I have been steward of all Britain's land, and earl I am potent, unlike to my companions, and I have Welshland half part in my hand; more I have alone than the others all clean. I am come to thee, for dearest of men thou art to me; if thou wilt swear to me oaths, I will take off thee these clothes, if thou wilt increase my land, and thy counsel place in my hand, and make me thy steward over all Britain's land, and through my counsel do all thy deeds, and if thou wilt pledge me in hand, that I shall rule it all, I will through all things make thee Britain's king." This monk sate well still, the speech went to him at his will. Then answered the monk with much delight: "Well worth thee, Vortiger, that thou art come here; if evermore cometh the day that I may be king, all my counsel and all my land I will place in thine hand, and all that thou wilt do, my men shall accept it. And oaths I will swear to thee, that I will not deceive thee." Thus said the monk; he mourned greatly how else it were, that he were

monk; for to him were black clothes wondrously odious. Vortiger was crafty and wary—that he made known everywhere—he took a cape of a knight of his, and on the monk he put it, and led him out of the place; he took a swain anon, and the black clothes put on him, and held secret discourse with the swain, as if it were the monk.

Monks passed upward, monks passed downward; they saw by the way the swain with monk's clothes; the hood hanged down as if he hid his crown; they all weened that it were their brother, who there sate so sorry in the speech-house, in the daylight, among all the knights. They came to their abbot, and greeted him in God's name: "Lord, benedicite, we are come before thee, for strange it seemeth to us what Vortiger thinketh in our speech-house, where he holdeth discourse, throughout this day no monk may come therein, except Constance alone, and the knights all clean. Sore we dread, that they him miscounsel." Then answered the abbot: "Nay, but they counsel him good; they bid him hold his hood (holy order), for now is his father dead." Vortiger there abode the while Constance away rode. Vortiger up arose, from the monastery departed, and all his knight out went forth-right.

The monks there ran thither anon, they weened to find Constance; when they saw the clothes lie by the walls, then each to other lamented their brother. The abbot leapt on horse, and after Vortiger rode, and soon gan overtake the Earl Vortiger. Thus said the abbot to Vortiger where he rode: "Say me, thou mad knight, why dost thou so great wrong? Thou takest from us our brother,—leave him, and take the other. Take Ambrosie the child, and make of him a king, and anger thou not Saint Benedict, nor do thou to him any wrong!"

Vortiger heard this—he was crafty and very wary;—soon he came back, and the abbot he took, and swore by his hand, that he would him hang, unless he him pledged, that he would forthright unhood Constance the king's son of this land, and for such need he should be king of this country. The abbot durst no other, there he unhooded his brother, and the child gave the abbot in hand twenty ploughlands, and afterwards they proceeded forth into London. Vortiger the high forbade his attendants, that they to no man should tell what they had in design. Vortiger lay in London, until the same set day came, that the knights of this land should come to husting.

At the day they came, many and numerous; they counselled, they communed, the stern warriors, that they would have Ambrosie, and raise for king; for Uther was too little—the yet he might suck—and Constance was monk, who was eldest of them, and they would not for anything make a monk king. Vortiger heard this, who was crafty and most wary, and leapt on foot as if it were a lion. None of the Britons there knew what Vortiger had done. He had in a chamber Constance the dear, well bathed and clothed, and afterwards hid with twelve knights. Then thus spake Vortiger—he was of crafty wary: "Listen, lordings, the while that I speak of kings. I was in Winchester, where I well sped, I spake with the abbot, who is a holy man and good, and said him the need that is come to this nation by Constantin's death—therefore he is uneasy—and of Constance the child, that he had holden. And I bade him for love of God, to take off the child's hood, and for such need he should be king in the country. And the abbot took his counsel, and did all that I bade him; and here I have his monks, who are good and chief, who shall witness bear before you all. Lo! where here is the same child, make we hereof a king, and here I hold the crown that thereto behoveth, and whoso will this withsay, he shall it buy dear!"

Vortiger was most strong, the highest man of Britain, was there never any so bold that his words durst deprecate. In the same town was the archbishop dead, and there was no bishop that forth on his way did not pass, nor monk nor any abbot, that he on his way did not ride, for they durst not for fear of God do there the wrong, to take the monk child, and make him Britain's king. Vortiger saw this—of all evil he was well ware, up he gan to stand, the crown he took in hand, and he set it upon Constance—that was to him in thought. Was there never any man that might there do Christendom, that might do blessing upon the king, but Vortiger alone did it clean for all! The beginning was unfair, and also was the end, he deserted God's hood (holy order), therefore he had

sorrow! Thus was Constance king of this land, and Vortiger was his steward.

Constance set all his kingdom in Vortiger's hand, and he did all in the land, as he himself would. Then saw Vortiger—of much evil he was ware—that Constance the king knew nothing of land (government?), for he had not learnt ever any learning, except what a monk should perform in his monastery. Vortiger saw that—the Worse was full nigh him!—oft he bethought him what he might do, how he might with leasing please the king. Now thou mayest hear, how this traitor gan him fare. The best men of Britain were all dead, now were the king's brothers both full little, and Guencehn the archbishop therebefore was dead, and this land's king himself of the law knew nothing. Vortiger saw this, and he came to the king, with mild speech his lord he gan greet: "Hail be thou, Constance, Britain's lord! I am come thus nigh thee for much need, for to say to thee tidings that are come to land, of very great danger. Now thee behoveth might, now weapons behove thee to defend thy country. Here are chapmen arrived from other lands, as it is the custom; they have brought to me toll for their goods, and they have told me and plighted troth, that the King of Norway will newly fare hither, and the Danish king these Danes will seek, and the King of Russia, sternest of all knights, and the King of Gothland with host most strong, and the King of Frise—therefore it alarmeth me. The tidings are evil that are come to land; herefore I am most adread, for I know no good counsel, unless we may with might send after knights, that are good and strong, and that are well able in land, and fill thy castles with keen men, and so thou mightest defend thy kingdom against foreigners, and maintain thy worship with high strength. For there is no kingdom, so broad nor so long, that will not soon be taken if there are too few warriors."

Then answered the king—of land he knew nothing—"Vortiger, thou art steward over all Britain's land, and thou shalt it rule after thy will. Send after knights that are good in fight; and take all in thine hand, my castles and my land, and do all thy will, and I will be still, except the single thing, that I will be called king."

Then laughed Vortiger—he was of evil most ware—was he never so blithe ere in his life! Vortiger took leave, and forth he gan pass, and so he proceeded through all Britain's land, all the castles and all the land he set in his own hand, and the fealty he took ever where he came. And so he took his messengers, and sent to Scotland, and ordered the Peohates, the knights best of all, three hundred to come to him, and he would well do to them. And the knights came to him thereafter well soon; thus spake the traitorous man: "Knights, ye are welcome. I have in my hand all this regal land, with me ye shall go, and I will you love, and I will you bring before our king; ye shall have silver and gold, the best horses of this land, clothes, and fair wives; your will I will perform. Ye shall be to me dear, for the Britons are hateful to me, loud and still I will do your will, if ye will in land hold me for lord." Then forth-right answered the knights "We will do all thy will," and they gan proceed to Constance the king. To the king came Vortiger—of evil he was well ware—and said him of—had done—"And here I have the Peohates, who shall be household knights; and I have most well stored all thy castles, and these foreign knights shall before us fight." The king commended all as Vortiger purposed, but alas! that the king knew nothing of his thoughts, nor of his treachery, that he did soon thereafter! These knights were in court highly honoured, full two years with the king they dwelt there, and Vortiger the steward was lord of them all. Ever he said that the Britons were not of use, but he said that the Peohates were good knights. Ever were the Britons deprived of goods, and the Peohates wielded all that they would. They had drink, they had meat, they had eke much bliss. Vortiger granted them all that they would, and was to them as dear as their own life; so that they all spake, where they ate their meat, that Vortiger were worthy to govern this realm throughout all things, better than three such kings! Vortiger gave these men very much treasure.

Then befell it on a day, that Vortiger lay at his inn; he took his two knights and sent after the Peohates, bade them come here, for they all should eat there. Forth-right the knights came to him, to his inn, he tried them with words as they sate at the board, he caused draughts to be brought them of many kinds of drinks, they

drank, they revelled, the day there forth passed. When they were so drunk that their shanks weakened, then spake Vortiger what he had previously thought: "Hearken now to me, knights, I will say to you forth-right of my mickle sorrow that I for you have mourned. The king delivered me this land for to be his steward. Ye are to me liefest of all men alive, but I have not wealth to give my knights, for this king possesses all this land, and he is young and also strong, and all I must yield to him that I take of his land, and if I destroy his goods, I shall suffer the law, and mine own wealth I have spent, because I would please you. And now I must depart hence far to some king, serve him with peace, and gain wealth with him; I may not for much shame have here this abode, but forth I must go to foreign lands And if the day shall ever come that I may acquire wealth, and I may so well thrive, that ye come in the land where I am, I will well reward you with much worship. And have now all good day, for to-night I will go away, it is a great doubt whether ye see me evermore"—These knights knew not what the traitor thought Vortiger was treacherous, for here he betrayed his lord, and the knights held it for sooth, what the traitor said Vortiger ordered his swains to saddle his steeds, and named twelve men to lead with himself, to horse they went as if they would depart from the land.

The Peohtes saw that—the drunken knights—how Vortiger would depart, herefore they had much care, they went to counsel, they went to communing, all they lamented their life exceedingly, because Vortiger was so dear to them And thus said the Peohtes, the drunken knights: "What may we now in counsel? who shall us now advise? who shall us feed, who shall us clothe, who shall be our lord at court? Now Vortiger is gone, we all must depart,—we will not for anything have a monk for king! But we will do well, forth-right go we to him, secretly and still, and do all our will, into his chamber, and drink of his beer When we have drunk, loudly revel we, and some shall go to the door, and with swords stand therebefore, and some forth-right take the king and his knights, and smite off the heads of them, and we ourselves have the court, and cause soon our lord Vortiger to be overtaken, and afterwards through all things raise him to be king;—then may we live as to us is befest of all."

The knights proceeded to the king forth-right; they all went throughout the hall into the king's chamber, where he sate by the fire There was none that spake a word except Gille Callæt; thus he spake with the king whom he there thought to betray: "Listen to me now, monarch, I will nothing lie to thee We have been in court highly honoured through thy steward, who hath governed all this land, he hath us well fed, he hath us well clothed And in sooth I may say to thee, with him we ate now to day, but sore it us grieveth, we had nought to drink, and now we are in thy chamber give us drink of thy beer" Then gave the king answer "That shall be your least care, for ye shall have to drink the while that you think good" Men brought them drink, and they gan to revel, thus said Gille Callæt—at the door he was full active "Where be ye, knights? Bestir you forth right!" And they seized the king, and smote off his head, and all his knights they slew forth-right And took a messenger, and sent toward London, that he should ride quickly after Vortiger, that he should come speedily, and take the kingdom, for that he should know through all things, slain was Constance the king. Vortiger heard that, who was traitor full secret; thus he ordered the messenger back forth-right anon, and bade them "well to keep all our worship that never one depart out of the place, but all abide me, until that I arrive, and so I will divide this land among us all."

Forth went the messenger, and Vortiger took anon and sent over London, and ordered them quickly and full soon, that they all should come to husting. When the burgh-men were come, who were most bold, then spake Vortiger, who was traitor full secret,—much he gan to weep, and sorrowfully to sigh, but it was in his head, and not in his heart. Then asked him the burgh-men, who were most bold. "Lord Vortiger, what is that thou mournest? Thou art no woman so sore to weep." Then answered Vortiger, who was traitor full secret: "I will tell you piteous speeches, of much calamity that is come to the land. I have been in this realm your king's steward, and spoken with him, and loved him as my life. But he would not at the end any counsel approve, he loved

the Peohtes, the foreign knights, and he would not do good to us, nor anywhere fair receive, but to them he was gracious, ever in their lives I might not of the king have remuneration (or wages), I spent my wealth, the while that it lasted, and afterwards I took leave to go to my land, and when I had my tribute, come again to court. When the Peohtes saw that the king had no knights, nor ever any kind of man that would aught for them do, they took their course into the king's chamber I say you through all things, they have slain the king, and think to destroy this kingdom and us all, and will forth-right make them king of a Peoht. But I was his steward, avenge I will my lord, and every brave man help me to do that. On I will with my gear, and forth-right I will go."

Thirty hundred knights marched out of London; they rode and they ran, forth with Vortiger, until they approached where the Peohtes dwelt. And he took one of his knights, and sent to the Peohtes, and said to them that he came, if they would him receive. The Peohtes were blithe for their murder (that they had committed), and they took their good gear—there was neither shield nor spear Vortiger weaponed all his knights forth right, and the Peohtes there came, and brought the head of the king. When Vortiger saw this head, then fell he full nigh to the ground, as if he had grief most of all men, with his countenance he gan he, but his heart was full blithe. Then said Vortiger, who was traitor full secret: "Every brave man lay on them with sword, and avenge well in the land the sorrow of our lord!" None they captured, but all they them slew; and proceeded to the inn, into Winchester, and slew their swains, and their chamber-servants, their cooks, and their boys, all they deprived of life-day. Thus faired the tidings of Constance the king.

And the worldly-wise men took charge of the other children; for they had care of Vortiger they took Ambrosie and Uther, and led them over sea, into the Less Britain, and delivered them fairly to Biduz the king. And he them fairly received, for he was their kin and their friend, and with much joy the children he brought up; and so well many years with him they were there.

Vortiger in this land was raised to be king; all the strong burghs stood in his hand; five-and-twenty years he was king here. He was mad, he was wild, he was cruel, he was bold; of all things he had his will, except the Peohtes were never still, but ever they advanced over the north end, and afflicted this kingdom with prodigious harm, and avenged their kin enow, whom Vortiger slew here.

In the meantime came tidings into this land, that Aurelie was knight, who was named Ambrosie, and also was Uther, good knight and most wary, and would come to this land, and lead an army most strong. This was many times a saying oft repeated; oft came these tidings to Vortiger the king; therefore it oft shamed him, and his heart angered, for men said it everywhere:—"Now will come Ambrosie and Uther, and will avenge soon Constance, the king of this land; there is no other course, avenge they will their brother, and slay Vortiger, and burn him to dust; thus they will set all this land in their own hand!" So spake each day all that passed by the way.

Vortiger bethought him what he might do, and thought to send messengers into other lands, after foreign knights, who might him defend; and thought to be wary against Ambrosie and Uther.

In the meantime came tidings to Vortiger the king, that over sea were come men exceeding strange; in the Thames to land they were come; three ships good came with the flood, therein three hundred knights, kings as it were, without (besides) the shipmen who were there within. These were the fairest men that ever here came, but they were heathens—that was the more harm! Vortiger sent to them, and asked how they were disposed (their business); if they sought peace, and recked of his friendship? They answered wisely, as well they knew, and said that they would speak with the king, and lovingly him serve, and hold him for lord; and so they gan wend forth to the king. Then was Vortiger the king in Canterbury, where he with his court nobly diverted themselves; there these knights came before the sovereign. As soon as they met him, they greeted him fair, and said that they would serve him in this land, if he would them with right retain. Then answered Vortiger—of each evil he was ware—"In all my life that I have lived, by day nor by night saw I never ere such knights; for your arrival

I am blithe, and with me ye shall remain, and your will I will perform, by my quick life! But first I would of you learn, through your sooth worship, what knights ye be, and whence ye are come, and whether ye will be true, old and eke new?"

Then answered the one who was the eldest brother: "Listen to me now, lord king, and I will make known to you what knights we are, and whence we are come. I hight Hengest; Hors is my brother; we are of Alemaine, a land noblest of all, of the same end that Angles is named. In our land are strange tidings; after fifteen years the folk is assembled, all our nation-folk, and cast their lots; upon whom that it falleth, he shall depart from the land. The five shall remain, the sixth shall forth proceed out of the country to a foreign land; be he man ever so loved, he shall forth depart. For there is folk very much, more than they would desire; the women go there with child as the wild deer, every year they bear child there! That is fallen on us, that we should depart; we might not remain, for life nor for death, nor for ever anything, for fear of the sovereign. Thus we fared there, and therefore are we now here, to seek under heaven land and good lord. Now thou hast heard, lord king, sooth of us through all things." Then answered Vortiger-of each evil he was ware-"I believe thee, knight, that thou sayest to me right sooth. And what are your creeds, that ye in believe, and your dear god, whom ye worship?" Then answered Hengest, fairest of all knights-in all this kingdom is not a knight so tall nor so strong:-"We have good gods, whom we love in our mind, whom we have hope in, and serve them with might. The one hight Phebus; the second Saturnus; the third hight Woden, who is a mighty god; the fourth hight Jupiter, of all things he is aware; the fifth hight Mercurius, who is the highest over us; the sixth hight Appolin, who is a god brave; the seventh hight Tervagant, a high god in our land. Yet (in addition) we have a lady, who is high and mighty, high she is and holy, therefore courtiers love her-she is named Frea-well she them treateth. But among all our dear gods whom we shall serve, Woden had the highest law in our elders' days; he was dear to them even as their life, he was their ruler, and did to them worship; the fourth day in the week they gave him for his honour. To the Thunder (Jupiter) they gave Thursday, because that it may help them; to Frea, their lady, they gave her Friday; to Saturnus they gave Saturday; to the Sun they gave Sunday; to the Moon they gave Monday; to Tidea they gave Tuesday." Thus said Hengest, fairest of all knights. Then answered Vortiger-of each evil he was ware-"Knights, ye are dear to me, but these tidings are loathsome to me; your creeds are wicked, ye believe not on Christ, but ye believe on the Worse, whom God himself cursed; your gods are of nought, in hell they lie beneath. But nevertheless I will retain you in my power, for northward are the Peohtes, knights most brave, who oft into my land lead host most strong, and oft do me much shame, and therefore I have grief. And if ye will me avenge, and procure me their heads, I will give you land, much silver and gold." Then answered Hengest, fairest of all knights: "If Saturnus so will it, and Woden, our lord, on whom we believe, it shall all thus be!"

Hengest took leave, and gan wend to his ships; there was many a strong knight; they drew their ships upon the land. Forth went the warriors to Vortiger the king; Hengest went before, and Hors, next of all to him; then the Alemainish men, who were noble in deeds; and afterwards they sent to him (Vortiger) their brave Saxish knights, Hengest's kinsmen, of his old race. They came into hall, fairly all; better were clothed and better were fed Hengest's swains, than Vortiger's thanes! Then was Vortiger's court held in contempt! the Britons were sorry for such a sight.

It was no whit long before five knights' sons who had travelled quickly came to the king; they said to the king new tidings: "Now forth-right the Peohtes are come; through thy land they run, and harry, and burn, and all the north end fell to the ground; hereof thou must advise thee, or we all shall be dead." The king bethought him what he might do, he sent to the inn, after all his men. There came Hengest, there came Hors, there came many a man full brave; there came the Saxish men, Hengest's kinsmen, and the Alemainish knights, who are good in fight. The King Vortiger saw this; blithe was he then there.

The Peohtes did, as was their custom, on this side of the Humber they were come. And the King Vortiger of their coming was

full aware; together they came (encountered), and many there slew; there was fight most strong, combat most stern! The Peohtes were oft accustomed to overcome Vortiger, and so they thought then to do, but it befell then in other wise, for it was safety to them (the Britons) that Hengest was there, and the strong knights who came from Saxland, and the brave Alemainish, who came thither with Hors, for very many Peohtes they slew in the fight; fiercely they fought, the fated fell! When the noon was come, then were the Peohtes overcome, and quickly away they fled, on each side they forth fled, and all day they fled, many and without number. The King Vortiger went back to lodging, and ever were nigh to him Hors and Hengest. Hengest was dear to the king, and to him he gave Lindesey, and he gave Hors treasures enow, and all their knights he treated exceeding well, and thus a good time it stood in the same wise. The Peohtes durst never come into the land, no robbers nor outlaws, that they were not soon slain; and Hengest exceeding fairly served the king.

Then befell it on a time, that the king was very blithe, on a high-day, among his people. Hengest bethought him what he might do, for he would hold secret discourse with the king; he went before the king, and gan greet fair. The king up stood, and set him by himself; they drank, they revelled-bliss was among them. Then quoth Hengest to the king: "Lord, hearken tidings, and I will tell thee of secret discourse, if thou wilt well listen to my advice, and not hold in wrath what I well teach." And the king answered as Hengest would it. Then said Hengest, fairest of all knights: "Lord, I have many a day advanced thy honour, and been thy faithful man in thy rich court, and in each fight the highest of thy knights. And I have often heard anxious whisperings among thy courtiers; they hate thee exceedingly, unto the bare death, if they it durst show. Oft they speak stilly, and discourse with whispers, of two young men, that dwell far hence; the one hight Uther, the other Ambrosie-the third hight Constance who was king in this land, and he here was slain through traitorous usage. The others will now come, and avenge their brother, all consume thy land, and slay thy people, thyself and thy folk drive out of land. And thus say thy men, where they sit together, because the twain brothers are both royally born, of Androein's race, these noble Britons; and thus thy folk stilly condemn thee. But I will advise thee of thy great need, that thou procure knights that are good in fight; and give to me a castle, or a royal burgh, that I may be in, the while that I live. For I am for thee hated-therefore I ween to be dead, fare wherever I fare, I am never without care, unless I be fast inclosed in a castle. If thou wilt do this for me, I will it receive with love, and quickly I will send after my wife, who is a Saxish woman, of wisdom excellent, and after my daughter Rowenne, who is most dear to me. When I have my wife, and my kinsmen, and I am in thy land fully settled, the better I will serve thee, if thou grantest me this." Then answered Vortiger-of each evil he was ware-"Take quickly knights, and send after thy wife, and after thy children, the young and the old, and after thy kin, and receive them with joy; when they to thee come, thou shalt have riches to feed them nobly, and worthily to clothe them. But I will not give to thee any castle or burgh, for men would reproach me in my kingdom, for ye hold the heathen law that stood in your elders' days, and we hold Christ's law, and will ever in our days." The yet spake Hengest, fairest of all knights: "Lord, I will perform thy will, here and over all, and do all my deeds after thy counsel. Now will I speedily send after my wife, and after my daughter, who is to me very dear, and after brave men, the best of my kin. And thou give me so much land, to stand in mine own hand, as a bull's hide will each way overspread, far from each castle, amidst a field. Then nor the poor nor the rich may blame thee, that thou hast given any noble burgh to a heathen man." And the king granted him as Hengest yearned.

Hengest took leave, and forth he gan pass, and after his wife he sent messengers, to his own land, and he himself went over this land, to seek a broad field whereon he might well spread his fair hide. He came to a spot, in a fair field, he had obtained a hide to his need, of a wild bull that was wondrously strong. He had a wise man, who well knew of craft, who took this hide, and laid it on a board, and whet his shears, as if he would shear. Of the hide he carved a thong, very small and very long, the thong was not very broad, but as it were a thread of twine; when the thong was

all slit, it was wondrously long, about therewith he encompassed a great deal of land. He began to dig a ditch very mickle, there upon a stone wall, that was strong over all, a burgh he areared, mickle and lofty. When the burgh was all ready, then shaped he to it a name, he named it full truly Kaer-Carrai in British, and English knights they called it Thongchester. Now and evermore the name standeth there, and for no other adventure had the burgh the name, until that Danish men came, and drove out the Britons; the third name they set there, and Lanecastel (Lancaster) it named; and for such events the town had these three names.

In the meantime arrived hither Hengest's wife with her ships; she had for companions fifteen hundred riders; with her came, to wit, mickle good ships; therein came much of Hengest's kin, and Rowenne, his daughter, who was to him most dear. It was after a while, that that time came, that the burgh was completed with the best of all. And Hengest came to the king, and asked him to a banquet, and said that he had prepared an inn against him (his coming) and bade that he should come thereto, and he should be fairly received. And the king granted him as Hengest it would.

It came to the time that the king gan forth proceed, with the dearest men of all his folk; forth he gan proceed until he came to the burgh. He beheld the wall up and down over all; all it liked him well, that he on looked. He went into the hall, and all his knights with him; trumps they blew, games men gan to call, boards they ordered to be spread, knights sate thereat, they ate, they drank, joy was in the burgh!—when the folk had eaten, then was the better befallen to them.

Hengest went into the inn, where Rowenne dwelt; he caused her to be clad with excessive pride; all the clothes that she had on, they were most excellent, they were good with the best, embroidered with gold. She bare in her hand a golden bowl, filled with wine, that was one wondrous good. High-born men led her into the hall before the king, fairest of all things! Rouwenne sate on her knee, and called to the king, and thus first she said in English land: "Lord king, wassail! for thy coming I am glad." The king this heard, and knew not what she said, the King Vortiger asked his knights soon, what were the speech that the maid spake. Then answered Keredic, a knight most admirable; he was the best interpreter that ere came here: "Listen to me now, my lord king, and I will make known to thee what Rowenne saith, fairest of all women. It is the custom in Saxland, wheresoever any people make merry in drink, that friend sayeth to his friend, with fair comely looks, 'Dear friend, wassail!'—the other sayeth, 'Drinchail!' The same that holds the cup, he drinketh it up; another full cup men thither bring, and give to his comrade. When the full cup is come, then kiss they thrice. These are the good customs in Saxland, and in Alemaine they are accounted noble!"

Vortiger heard this—of each evil he was ware—and said it in British, for he knew no English: "Maiden Rouwenne, drink then blithely!" The maid drank up the wine, and let do (put) other wine therein, and gave to the king, and thrice him kissed. And through the same people the custom came to this land of Wassail and Drinchail—many a man thereof is glad! Rouwenne the fair sate by the king; the king beheld her longingly, she was dear to him in heart, oft he kissed her, oft he embraced her; all his mind and his might inclined towards the maiden.

The Worse was there full nigh, who in each game is full cruel; the Worse who never did good, he troubled the king's mood; he mourned full much, to have the maiden for wife. That was a most loathly thing, that the Christian king should love the heathen maid, to the harm of his people! The maiden was dear to the king, even as his own life; he prayed to Hengest, his chieftain, that he should give him the maid-child. Hengest found in his counsel to do what the king asked him; he gave him Rouwenne, the woman most fair. To the king it was pleasing; he made her queen, all after the laws that stood in the heathen days; was there no Christendom, where the king took the maid, nor priest, nor any bishop, nor was God's book ever handled, but in the heathen fashion he wedded her, and brought her to his bed! Maiden he had her, and ample gift bestowed on her; when he had disgraced himself on her, he gave her London and Kent.

The king had three sons, who were men exceeding fair; the eldest hight Vortimer,—Pascent, and Catiger. Garengan was an

earl, who possessed Kent long, and his father before him, and he afterwards through his kin (by inheritance), when he best weened to hold his land, then had it the queen, and Hengest in his hand; strange it seemed to the knight, what the king thought. The king loved the heathens and harmed the Christians, the heathens had all this land to rule under their hand, and the king's three sons oft suffered sorrow and care. Their mother was then dead, therefore they had the less counsel—their mother was a woman most good, and led a life very Christian, and their stepmother was heathen, Hengest's daughter.

It was not long but a while, that the king made a feast, exceeding great, the heathens he brought thereto, he weened most well to do; thither came thanes, knights and swains. And all that knew of book (the Christians) forsook the feast, for the heathen men were highest in the court, and the Christian fold was held for base; the heathens were blithe, for the king loved them greatly. Hengest bethought him what he might do; he came to the king, with a hailing (salutation), and drank to the king. Then thus spake Hengest, fairest of all knights who lived of heathen law in those days: "Hearken to me now, lord king, thou art to me dear through all things; thou hast my daughter, who is to me very dear, and I am to thee among folk as if I were thy father. Hearken to my instruction, it shall be to thee lief, for I wish chiefly to help counsel thee. Thy court hate thee on my account, and I am detested for thee, and thee hate kings, earls and thanes; they fare in thy land with a host exceeding strong. If thou wilt avenge thee with much worship, and do woe to thy enemies, send after my son Octa, and after another, Ebissa, his wed-brother. These are the noblest men that ever led army; and give them of thy land in the north end. They are of mickle might, and strong in fight; they will defend thy land well with the best; then mightest thou in joy thy life all spend, with hawks and with hounds court-play love; needest thou never have care of foreign people." Then answered Vortiger—of each evil he was ware—"Send thy messengers into Saxland, after thy son Octa, and after thy friends more. Cause him to know well, that he send his writs after all the knights that are good in fight, over all Saxland, that they come to my need, and though he bring ten thousand men, all they shall be welcome to me." Hengest heard this, fairest of all knights, then was he so blithe as he was never in his life.

Hengest sent his messengers into Saxland, and bade Octa come, and his wed-brother Ebissa, and all of their kindred that they might gain, and all the knights that they might get. Octa sent messengers over three kingdoms, and bade each brave man speedily to come to him, who would obtain land, or silver or gold. They came soon to the army, as hail that falleth, that was to wit, with three hundred ships. Forth went with Octa thirty thousand and eke more, brave men and keen; and Ebissa, his companion, afterwards arrived with numberless folk, and he led to wit an hundred and fifty ships; thereafter arrived five and five, by six, by seven, by ten, and by eleven; and thus the heathen warriors they arrived toward this land, to the court of this king, so that this land was so full of foreign people, that there was no man so wise, nor so quick-witted, that might separate the Christians and the heathens, for the heathens were so rife, and ever they speedily came!

When the Britons saw that sorrow was in the land, therefore they were sorry, and in their heart dreary, and proceeded to the king, the highest of this land, and thus to him said with sorrowful voice: "Listen to us, lord king, of our discourse; thou art through us (by our means) bold king in this Britain, and thou hast procured to thee harm and much sin; brought heathen folk—yet it may thee harm;—and thou forsakest God's law, for foreign folk, and wilt not worship our Lord, for these heathen knights. And we would pray thee, for all God's peace, that thou leave them, and drive from thy land. If thou else (otherwise) mightest not, we will make mickle fight, and drive them from land, or fell them down, or we ourselves will lie slain, and let the heathen folk hold this realm, possess it with joy, if they may it win. And if they all are heathen, and thou alone Christian, they will never long have thee for king, except thou in thy days receive the heathen law, and desert the high God, and praise their idols. Then shalt thou perish in this world's realm, and thy wretched soul sink to hell; then hast thou dearly bought the love of thy bride!" Then answered Vortiger—of

each evil he was ware:—"I will not leave them, by my quick life! For Hengest is hither come, he is my father, and I his son; and I have for mistress his daughter Rowenne, and I have wedded her, and had in my bed, and afterwards I sent after Octa, and after more of his companions;—how might I for shame shun them so soon, and drive from land my dear friends?" Then answered the Britons, with sorrow bound: "We will nevermore obey thy commands, nor come to thy court, nor hold thee for king, but we will hate thee with great strength, and all thine heathen friends with harm greet. Be Christ now, that is God's son, our help!" Forth went the earls, forth went the lords, forth went the bishops, and the book-learned men, forth went the thanes, forth went the swains, all the Britons, until they came to London.

There was many a noble Briton at the husting, and the king's three sons they all were come thither; there was Vortimer, Pascent, and Catiger, and very many others, that came with the brothers; all the folk came thither, that loved the Christendom. And all the rich men betook them to counsel, and took the king's eldest son, who was come to the husting, and with mickle song of praise elevated him to be king. Then was Vortimer Christian king there, and Vortiger, his father, followed the heathens. All thus it happened, as the counsel was done.

And Vortimer, the young king, was most keen through all things; he sent Hengest and Hors his brother, unless speedily they departed from this realm, he would evil do to them, both blind and hang them; and his own father he would destroy, and all the heathens, with great strength. Then answered Hengest, fairest of all knights: "Here we will dwell winter and summer, ride and run with the King Vortiger; and all that with Vortimer go, they shall have sorrow and care!" Vortimer heard that—he was wise and most wary—and caused a host to be assembled over all this land, that all the Christian folk should come to his court. Vortimer, the young king, in London held his husting; the king ordered each man that loved the Christendom, that they all should hate the heathens, and bring the heads of them to Vortimer the king, and have twelve pennies for reward, for his good deed. Vortimer the young marched out of London, and Pascent, his brother, and Catiger, the other; to them was come word, that Hengest lay at Epiford, upon the water that men name Darwent. There came together sixty thousand men; on one half was Vortimer, Pascent, and Catiger, and all the folk that loved our Lord; on the other half were chiefs with Vortiger the king, Hengest and his brother, and many thousand others. Together they came, and combated with might; there fell to the ground two and thirty hundred of Hengest's men; and Hors was wounded. Catiger came there, and with his spear ran him through, and Hors forth-right there wounded Catiger. And Hengest gan to flee with all his followers, and Vortiger the king fled forth as the wind; they flew forth into Kent, and Vortimer went after them; there upon the seashore Hengest suffered pain; there they gan to halt, and fought very long; five thousand there were slain, and deprived of lifeday, of Vortiger's men, of the heathen race.

Hengest bethought him what he might do; he saw there beside a haven very large, many good ships there stood in the sea-flood. They saw on their right hand an island exceeding fair, it is called Thanet; thitherward they were brisk; there the Saxish men sought the sea, and anon gan pass into the island. And the Britons followed after them, with many kind of crafts, and surrounded them on each side; with ships and with boats they gan to smite and shoot. Oft was Hengest woe, and never worse than then; unless he did other counsel he should there be dead. He took a spear-shaft, that was long and very tough, and put on the end a fair mantle, and called to the Britons, and bade them abide; he would speak with them, and yearn the king's grace, and send Vortiger with peace to the land, to make this agreement that he might depart without more shame into Saxland.

The Britons went to the land, to Vortimer their king, and Hengest spake with Vortiger, in most secret converse. Vortiger went on the land, and bare a wand in his hand. The while that they spake of peace the Saxons leapt into their ships, and drew up high their sails to the top, and proceeded with weather in the wild sea, and left in this land their wives and their children, and Vortiger the king, who loved them through all things. With much

grief of mind Vortiger gan away fare; so long they proceeded, that in Saxland they were (arrived). Then were in Britain the Britons most bold; they assumed to them mickle mood, and did all that seemed good to them; and Vortimer, the young king, was doughty man through all things. And Vortiger, his father, proceeded over this Britain, but it was no man so poor, that did not revile him, and so he gan to wander full five years. And his son Vortimer dwelt here powerful king, and all this nation loved him greatly. He was mild to each man, and taught the folk God's law, the young and the old, how they should hold Christendom.

He sent letters to Rome, to the excellent Pope, who was named Saint Romain—all Christendom he made glad.—He took two bishops, holy men they were both, Germain and Louis, of Auxerre and of Troyes; they proceeded out of Rome, so that they hither came. Then was Vortimer so blithe as he was never ere here; he and all his knights went forth-right on their bare feet towards the bishops, and with much mirth mouths there kissed. Now mayest thou hear of the King Vortimer, how he spake with Saint Germain,—for their coming he was glad. "Listen to me, lordings, I am king of this people; I hight Vortimer, my brother hight Catiger; and Vortiger hight our father—miscounsel followeth him! He hath brought into this land heathen people; but we have put them to flight, as our full foes, and felled with weapon many thousands of them, and sent them over sea-stream, so that they never shall come again. And we shall in land worship our Lord, comfort God's folk, and friendly it maintain, and be mild to the land-tillers; churches we shall honour, and heathendom hate. Each good man shall have his right, if God it will grant, and each thral and each slave be set free. And here I give to you in hand each church-land all free; and I forgive to each widow her lord's testament, and each shall love other as though they were brothers. And thus we shall in our day put down Hengest's laws, and him and his heathendom that he hither brought, and deceived my father through his treacherous crafts; through his daughter Rowenne he betrayed my father. And my father so evilly began, that he shunned the Christendom, and loved the heathen laws too much, which we shall avoid the while that we live."

Then answered Saint Germain—for such words he was glad:—"I thank my Lord, who shaped the daylight, that he such mercy sent to mankind!" These bishops proceeded over this land, and set it all in God's hand, and the Christendom they righted, and the folk thereto instructed; and then soon thereafter they departed to Rome, and said to the Pope, who was named Romain, how they had done here, restored the Christendom. And thus it stood a time in the same wise.

Go we yet to Vortiger—of all kings be he most wretched!—he loved Rowenne, of the heathen race, Hengest's daughter, she seemed to him well soft. Rowenne bethought her what she might do, how she might avenge her father and her friends' death. Oft she sent messengers to Vortimer the king; she sent him treasures of many a kind, of silver and of gold, the best of any land; she asked his favour, that she might here dwell with Vortiger his father, and follow his counsels. The king for his father's request granted to her her prayer, except that she should do well, and love the Christendom; all that the king yearned, all she it granted. But alas! that Vortimer was not aware of her thought; alas! that the good king of her thought knew nothing; that he knew not the treachery that the wicked woman thought!

It befell on a time she betook her to counsel, that she would go to the King Vortimer, and do by his counsel all her need, and at what time she might do well, and receive the Christendom. Forth she gan ride to Vortimer the king; when she him met, fair she greeted him: "Hail be thou, lord king, Britain's darling! I am come to thee; Christendom I will receive, on the same day that thou thyself deemest fit."

Then was Vortimer the king blithe through all things; he weened that it were sooth what the wretch said. Trumpets there blew, bliss was in the court; forth men brought the water before the king; they sate then at the board with much bliss. When the king had eaten, then went the thanes—men to meat; in hall they drank; harps there resounded. The treacherous Rowenne went to a tun, wherein was placed the king's dearest wine. She took in hand a bowl of red gold, and she gan to pour out on the king's

bench. When she saw her time, she filled her vessel with wine, and before all the company she went to the king, and thus the treacherous woman hailed him (drank his health): "Lord king, wassail, for thee I am most joyful!" Harken now the great treachery of the wicked woman, how she gan there betray the King Vortimer! The king received her fair, to his own destruction. Vortimer spake British, and Rowenne Saxish; to the king it seemed game enow, for her speech he laughed. Harken how she took on, this deceitful woman! In her bosom she bare, beneath her teats, a golden phial filled with poison; and the wicked Rowenne drank (or drenched) the bowl, until she had half done, after the king's will. The while that the king laughed, she drew out the phial; the bowl she set to her chin, the poison she poured in the wine, and afterwards she delivered the cup to the king; the king drank all the wine, and the poison therein. The day forth passed, bliss was in the court, for Vortimer the good king of the treachery knew nothing, for he saw Rowenne hold the bowl, and drink half of the same wine that she had put therein. When it came to the night, then separated the courtiers; and the evil Rowenne went to her inn, and all her knights with her forth-right. Then ordered she her swains, and eke the thanes all, that they in haste their horse should saddle; and they most still to steal out of the burgh, and proceed all by night to Thwongchester forth-right, and there most fast to inclose them in a castle, and lie to Vortiger, that his son would besiege him. And Vortiger the false king believed the leasing.

Now understood Vortimer, his son, that he had taken poison; might no leechcraft help him any whit. He took many messengers, and sent over his land, and bade all his knights to come to him forth-right. When the folk was arrived, then was the king exceeding ill; then asked the king their peace, and thus he spake with them all: "Of all knights are ye best that serve any king; there is of me no other hap, but that speedily I be dead. Here I deliver you my land, all my silver and all my gold, and all my treasures—your worship is the greater. And ye forth-right send after knights, and give them silver and gold, and hold ye yourselves your land, and avenge you, if ye can, of Saxish men; for when as I be departed, Hengest will make care to you. And take ye my body, and lay in a chest, and carry me to the sea strand, where Saxish men will come on land; anon as they know me there, away they will go; neither alive nor dead dare they abide me!"

Among all this discourse the good king died; there was weeping, there was lament, and piteous cries! They took the king's body, and carried to London, and beside Belyns-gate buried him fair; and carried him no whit as the king ordered. Thus lived Vortimer, and thus he ended there.

Then the Britons fell into evil counsel; they took Vortiger anon, and delivered him all this kingdom; there was a well rueful thing, now was eft Vortiger king! Vortiger took his messengers, and sent to Saxland, and greeted well Hengest, fairest of all knights, and bade him in haste to come to this land, and with him should bring here a hundred riders. "For that know thou through all things, that dead is Vortimer the king, and safe thou mayest hither come, for dead is Vortimer my son. It is no need for thee to bring with thee much folk, least our Britons eft be angry, so that sorrow eft come between you."

Hengest assembled a host of many kind of land, so that he had to wit seven hundred ships, and each ship he filled with three hundred knights; in the Thames at London Hengest came to land. The tidings came full soon to Vortiger the king, that Hengest was in haven with seven hundred ships. Oft was Vortiger woe, but never worse than then, and the Britons were sorry, and sorrowful in heart; they knew not in the worlds-realm counsel that were to them pleasing. Hengest was of evil ware—that he well showed there—he took soon his messengers, and sent to the king, and greeted Vortiger the king with words most fair, and said that he was come as a father should to his son; with peace and with friendship he would dwell in amity; peace he would love, and wrong he would shun; peace he would have, peace he would hold; and all this nation he would love, and love Vortiger the king through all things. But he had brought, in this land, out of Saxland, seven hundred ships of heathen folk, "who are the bravest of all men that dwell under the sun, and I will," quoth Hengest, "lead them all to the king, at a set day, before all his people. And the king

shall arise, and choose of the knights two hundred knights, to lead to his fight, who shall guard the king precious through all things. And afterwards the others shall depart to their land, with peace and with amity, again to Saxland; and I will remain with the best of all men, that is Vortiger the king, whom I love through all things." The tidings came to the Britons how Hengest them promised; then were they fain for his fair words, and set they peace and set amity to such a time that the king on a day would see this folk. Hengest heard that, fairest of all knights; then was he so blithe as he was never ere in life, for he thought to deceive the king in his realm. Here became Hengest wickedest of knights; so is every man that deceiveth one, who benefits him. Who would ween, in this worlds-realm, that Hengest thought to deceive the king who had his daughter! For there is never any man, that men may not over-reach with treachery. They took an appointed day, that these people should come them together with concord and with peace, in a plain that was pleasant beside Ambresbury; the place was Aelenge, now hight it Stonehenge. There Hengest the traitor either by word or by writ made known to the king, that he would come with his forces, in honour of the king, but he would not bring in retinue but three hundred knights, the wisest men of all that he might find. And the king should bring as many on his side bold thanes, and who should be the wisest of all that dwelt in Britain, with their good vestments, all without weapons, that no evil should happen to them, through confidence of the weapons. Thus they it spake, and eft they it brake, for Hengest the traitor thus gan he teach his comrades, that each should take a long saex (knife), and lay by his shank, within his hose, where he it might hide. When they came together, the Saxons and Britons, then quoth Hengest, most deceitful of all knights: "Hail be thou, lord king, each is to thee thy subject! If ever any of thy men hath weapon by his side, send it with friendship far from ourselves, and be we in amity, and speak we of concord; how we may with peace our lives live." Thus the wicked man spake there to the Britons. Then answered Vortiger—here he was too unwary—"If here is any knight so wild, that hath weapon by his side, he shall lose the hand through his own brand, unless he soon send it hence." Their weapons they sent away, then had they nought in hand; knights went upward, knights went downward, each spake with other as if he were his brother.

When the Britons were mingled with the Saxons, then called Hengest, of knights most treacherous, "Take your saexes, my good warriors, and bravely bestir you, and spare ye none!" Noble Britons were there, but they knew not of the speech, what the Saxish men said them between. They drew out the saexes, all aside; they smote on the right side, they smote on the left side, before and behind they laid them to the ground, all they slew that they came nigh; of the king's men there fell four hundred and five-woe was the king alive! Then Hengest grasped him with his grim gripe, and drew him to him by the mantle, so that the strings brake. And the Saxons set on him, and would the king kill, and Hengest gan him defend, and would not suffer it; but he held him full fast, the while the fight lasted. There was many noble Briton bereaved of the life! Some they fled quickly over the broad plain, and defended them with stones, for weapons had they none. There was fight exceeding hard, there fell many a good knight! There was a bold churl of Salisbury come, he bare on his back a great strong club.

Then was there a noble earl, named Aldolf, knight with the best, he possessed Gloucester, he leapt to the churl, as if it were a lion, and took from him the club, that he bare on his back; whomsoever he smote therewith, there forth-right he died; before and behind he laid them to the ground. Three and fifty there he slew and afterwards drew towards a steed, he leapt upon the steed, and quickly gan him ride, he rode to Gloucester, and the gates locked full fast. And anon forth-right caused his knights to arm, and marched over all the land, and took what they found, they took cattle, they took corn, and all that they found alive, and brought to the burgh with great bliss; the gates they closed fast, and well them guarded.

Let us it thus stand, and speak we of the king. The Saxons leapt towards him, and would kill the king, but Hengest called forth-right, "Stop, my knights, ye shall him not destroy; for us he hath had much care, and he hath for queen my daughter who is

fair. But all his burghs he shall deliver to us, if he will enjoy his life, or else is sorrow given to him." Then was Vortiger fast bound, gyves exceeding great they put on his feet, he might not ever bite meat, nor speak with any friend, ere he had to them sworn upon relic that was choice, that he would deliver them all this kingdom, in hand, burghs and castles, and all his kingdoms. And all so he did, as it was deemed. And Hengest took in his hand all this rich kingdom, and divided among his people much of this land. He gave an earl all Kent, as it lay by London, he gave his steward Essex, and on his chamberlain he bestowed Middlesex. The knights received it, and a while they held it, the while Vortiger proceeded over this land, and delivered to Hengest his noble burghs. And Hengest forth-right placed his knights therein, the while much of the baser people lay in Sussex, and in Middlesex much of the race, and in Essex their noblest folk. The meat they carried off, all that they found, they violated the women, and God's law brake, they did in the land all that they would.

The Britons saw that, that mischief was in the land, and how the Saxish men were come to them. The Britons shaped to the land a name for the shame of Saxish men, and for the treachery that they had done, and for that cause that they with knives bereaved them of life, then called they all the land East-Sex and West-Sex, and the third Middle-Sex. Vortiger the king gave them all this land, so that a turf of land did not remain to him in hand. And Vortiger himself fled over Severn, far into Welsh-land, and there he gan tarry, and his retinue with him, that poor was become. And he had in hoard treasure most large, he caused his men to ride wide and far, and caused to be summoned to him men of each kind, whosoever would yearn his fee with friendship. That heard the Britons, that heard the Scots, they came to him riding, thereafter full soon; on each side thither they gan ride, many a noble man's son, for gold and for treasure. When he had together sixty thousand men, then assembled he the nobles that well could advise: "Good men, say me counsel, for to me is great need, where I might in wilderness work a castle, wherein I might live with my men, and hold it against Hengest with great strength, until that I might the better win my burghs, and avenge me of my enemies who felled my friends, and have all my kingdom wrested out of my hand, and thus driven me out, my full foes?" Then answered a wise man, who well could counsel: "Listen now to me, lord king, and I will show to thee a good thing; upon the mount of Reir I will advise, that thou work a castle with strong stone wall, for there thou mightest dwell, and live with joy; and yet thou hast in thy hand much silver and gold, to maintain thy people who shall thee help, and so thou mightest in life live best of all." Then answered the king: "Let it be made known in haste, over my numerous host, that I will go to the mount of Reir, and rear there a castle."

Forth went the king, and the host with him; when they thither came, a dyke they began soon; horns there blew, machines hewed; lime they gan to burn, and over the land to run, and all west Welsh-land set in Vortiger's hand; all they it took, that they nigh came. When the dyke was dug, and thoroughly deepened, then began they a wall on the dyke over all, and they laid together lime and stone; of machines there was plenty-five-and-twenty hundred! In the day they laid the wall, in the night it fell over all, in the morrow they reared it, in the night it gan to tumble! Full a se'nnight so it them served, each day they raised it, and each night it gan fall! Then was the king sorry, and sorrowful through all things, so was all the host terribly afraid; for ever they looked when Hengest should come upon them.

The king was full sorry, and sent after sages, after world-wise men, who knew wisdom, and bade them cast lots, and try incantations, try the truth with their powerful craft, on what account it were, that the wall that was so strong might not ever stand a night long. These world wise men there went in two parties, some they went to the wood, some to the cross ways; they gan to cast lots with their incantations, full three nights their crafts there they practised, they might never find, through never anything, on what account it were, that the wall that was so strong every night fell down, and the king lost his labour. But there was one sage, he was named Joram, he said that he it found—but it seemed leasing—he said that if men found in ever any land, ever any male child, that never had father, and opened his breast, and took of his blood,

and mingled with the lime, and laid in the wall, that then might it stand to the world's end. The word came to the king, of the leasing, and he it believed, though it were false. Soon he took his messengers, and sent over all the land, so far as they for care (fear) of death durst anyways fare, and in each town hearkened the rumours, where they might find speak of such a child.

These knights forth proceeded wide over the land; two of the number went a way that lay right west, that lay forth-right in where now Caermarthen is. Beside the burgh, in a broad way, all the burgh-lads had a great play. These knights were weary, and in heart exceeding sorry, and sate down by the play, and beheld these lads. After a little time they began striving—as it was ever custom among children's play,—the one smote the other, and he these blows suffered. Then was exceeding wrath Dinabuz toward Merlin, and thus quoit Dinabuz, who had the blow: "Merlin, wicked man, why hast thou thus done to me? Thou hast done me much shame, therefore thou shalt have grief. I am a king's son, and thou art born of nought; thou oughtest not in any spot to have free man's abode, for so was all the adventure, thy mother was a whore, for she knew not ever the man that begat thee on her, nor haddest thou any father among mankind. And thou in our land makest us to be shamed, thou art among us come, and art son of no man; thou shalt therefore in this day suffer death." The knights heard this, where they were aside; they arose up, and went near, and earnestly asked of this strange tale, that they heard of the lad.

Then was in Caermarthen a reve that hight Eli; the knights quickly came to the reve, and thus to him said soon with mouth:

"We are here-right Vortiger's knights, and have found here a young lad he is named Merlin, we know no whit his kin. Take him in haste, and send him to the king, as thou wilt live, and thy limbs have, and his mother with him, who bore him to be man. If thou this wilt do, the king will receive them, and if thou carest it not, therefore thou wilt be driven out, and this burgh all consumed, this folk all destroyed." Then answered Eli, the reve of Caermarthen "Well I wot, that all this land stands in Vortiger's hand, and we are all his men—his honour is the more!—and we shall do this gladly, and perform his will." Forth went the reve, and the burghers his associates, and found Merlin, and his playfellows with him Merlin they took, and his companions laughed, when that Merlin was led away, then was Dinabuz full glad, he weened that he were led away for to lose his limbs, but all another way set the doom, ere it were all done.

Now was Merlin's mother strangely become in a noble minster a hooded nun. Thither went Eli, the reve of Caermarthen, and took him the good lady, where she lay in the minster, and forth gan him run to the King Vortiger, and much folk with him, and led the nun and Merlin. The word (tidings) was soon made known to the King Vortiger's mouth, that Eli was come, and had brought the lady, and that Merlin her son was with her there come. Then was Vortiger blithe in life, and received the lady, with looks most fair and honour promised, and Merlin he delivered to twelve good knights, who were faithful to the king, and him should guard. Then said the King Vortiger, with the nun he spake there: "Good lady, say to me—well it shall be to thee—where wert thou born, who begat thee to be child?" Then answered the nun, and named her father:—"The third part of all this land stood in my father's hand, of the land he was king, known it was wide, he was named Conaan, lord of knights." Then answered the king, as if she were of his kin: "Lady, say thou it to me—well it shall be to thee—here is Merlin thy son, who begat him? Who was held for father to him among the folk?" Then hung she her head, and bent toward her breast; by the king she sate full softly, and thought a little while, after a while she spake, and said to the king: "King, I will tell thee marvellous stories. My father Conaan the king loved me through all things, then became I in stature wondrously fair. When I was fifteen years of age, then dwelt I in bower, in my mansion, my maidens with me, wondrously fair. And when I was in bed in slumber, with my soft sleep, then came before me the fairest thing that ever was born, as if it were a tall knight, arrayed all of gold. This I saw in dream each night in sleep. This thing glided before me, and glistened of gold, oft it me kissed, and oft it me embraced, oft it approached me, and oft it came to me very nigh; when I at length

looked to myself—strange this seemed to me—my meat to me was loathsome, my limbs unusual, strange it seemed to me, what it might be! Then perceived I at the end that I was with child, when my time came, this boy I had. I know not in this world what his father were, nor who begat him in this worlds-realm, nor whether it were evil thing, or on God's behalf dight. Alas! as I pray for mercy, I know not any more to say to thee of my son, how he is come to the world." The nun bowed her head down, and covered her features.

The king bethought him what he might do, and drew to him good councillors to counsel, and they said him counsel with the best, that he should send for Magan, who was a marvellous man. -He was a wise clerk, and knew of many crafts; he would advise well, he could far direct, he knew of the craft that dwelleth in the sky (astronomy), he could tell of each history (or language). Magan came to court where the king dwelt, and greeted the king with goodly words: "Hail be thou and sound, Vortiger the king! I am come to thee, show me thy will." Then answered the king, and told the clerk all, how the nun had said, and asked him thereof counsel, from the beginning to the end, all he him told. Then said Magan: "I know full well hereon. There dwell in the sky many kind of beings, that there shall remain until domesday arrive; some they are good, and some they work evil. Therein is a race very numerous, that cometh among men; they are named full truly Incubi Daemones; they do not much harm, but deceive the folk; many a man in dream off they delude, and many a fair woman through their craft childeth anon, and many a good man's child they beguile through magic. And thus was Merlin begat, and born of his mother, and thus it is all transacted," quoth the clerk Magan.

Then said Merlin to the king himself: "King, thy men have taken me, and I am to thee come, and I would learn what is thy will, and for what thing I am brought to the king?" Then said the king with quick speech: "Merlin, thou art hither come; thou art son of no man! Much thou longest after loath speech; learn thou wilt the adventure—now thou shalt hear it. I have begun a work with great strength, that hath my treasure well much taken away; five thousand men work each day thereon. And I have lime and stone, in the world is none better, nor in any land workmen so good. All that they lay in the day—in sooth I may say it—ere day in the morrow all it is down; each stone from the other felled to the ground! Now say my wise and my sage men, that if I take thy blood, out of thy breast, and work my will, and put to my lime, then may it stand to the world's end. Now thou knowest it all, how it shall be to thee." Merlin heard this, and angered in his mood, and said these words, though he were wrath: "God himself, who is lord of men, will it never, that the castle should stand for my heart's blood, nor ever thy stone wall lie still. For all thy sages are exceeding deceitful, they say leasings before thyself—that thou shalt find in this day's space. For Joram said this, who is my full foe; the tidings seem to me sport, I was shapen to his bane! Let Joram thy sage come before thee, and all his companions, forthright here, who told these leasings to the king, and if I say thee my sooth words of thy wall, and why it down falleth, and with sooth it prove, that their tales are leasing, give me their heads, if I thy work heal." Then answered the king with quick voice: "So help me my hand, this covenant I hold thee!"

To the king was brought Joram the sage, and seven of his companions—all they were fated to die! Merlin angered, and he spake wrathly:—"Say me, Joram, traitor—loathsome to me in heart—why falleth this wall to the ground, say me why it happeneth that the wall falleth, what men may find at the dyke's bottom?" Joram was still, he could not tell. Then said Merlin these words: "King, hold to me covenant! Cause this dyke to be dug anon seven feet deeper than it is now; they shall find a stone wondrously fair, it is fair and broad, for folk to behold." The dyke was dug seven feet deeper, then they found anon there-right the stone. Then said Merlin these words: "King, hold to me covenant! Say to me, Joram, man to me most hateful, and say to this king what kind of thing hath taken station under this stone?" Joram was still; he could not tell.

Then said Merlin a wonder: "A water here is under; do away this stone, the water ye shall find anon." They did away the stone before the king anon, the water they found anon. Then said Mer-

lin: "Ask me Joram, who is my full foe, after a while, to say thee of the bottom, what dwelleth in the water, winter and summer." The king asked Joram, but he knew nought thereof. The yet said Merlin these words: "King, hold to me covenant! Cause this water to be carried off, and away cast; there dwell at the bottom two strong dragons; the one is on the north side, the other on the south side, the one is milk-white, to each beast unlike, the other as red as blood, boldest of all worms! Each midnight they begin to fight, and through their fight thy works fell, the earth began to sink, and thy wall to tumble; and through such wonder thy wall is fallen, that happened in this flood, and not for my blood." This water was all carried off; the king's men were glad, great was the bliss before the monarch, and soon there-after they were sorry; ere the day came to an end, strange tidings they heard.

When the water was all carried off, and the pit was empty, then came out these two dragons, and made great din, and fought fiercely down in the dyke. Never saw any man any loathlier fight; flames of fire flew from their mouths! The monarch saw this fight, their grim gestures; then was he astonished in this worlds-realm, what this tokening were, that he saw there at the bottom, and how Merlin knew it, that no other man knew. First was the white above, and afterwards he was beneath, and the red dragon wounded him to death; and either went to his hole—no man born saw them afterwards! Thus fared this thing that Vortiger the king saw. And all that were with him loved Merlin greatly; and the king hated Joram, and deprived him of his head, and all his seven comrades that with him were there.

The king went to his house, and led Merlin with him, and said to him with much love: "Merlin, thou art welcome, and I will give thee all that thou desirest, of my land, of silver and of gold." He weened through Merlin to win all the land, but it happened all otherwise ere the day's end came. The king thus asked his dear friend Merlin, "Say me now, Merlin, man to me dearest, what betoken the dragons that made the din, and the stone, and the water, and the wondrous fight? Say me, if thy will is, what betokeneth all this? And afterwards thou must counsel me how I shall guide me, and how I may win my kingdom from Hengest, my wife's father, who hath harmed me greatly." Then answered Merlin to the king that spake with him: "King, thou art unwise, and foolish in counsel, thou askest of the dragons that made the din, and what betokened their fight, and their fierce assaults? They betoken kings that yet are to come, and their fight, and their adventure, and their fated folk! But if thou wert so wise a man, and so prudent in thought, that thou haddest inquired of me of thy many sorrows, thy great care, that is to come to thee, I would say to thee of thy sorrow." Then quoth Vortiger the king: "Dear friend Merlin, say me of the things that are to come to me." "Blithely," quoth Merlin, with bold voice, "I will say to thee; but ever it will thee rue. King, king, be-see thee (see to thyself), sorrow is to thee given of Constantine's kin!—his son thou killedest; thou causedst Constance to be slain, who was king in this land; thou causedst thy Peohtes to betray (or destroy) him basely; therefore thou shalt suffer sorrows most of all! Afterwards thou drewest upon thee foreign people, the Saxons to this land, therefore thou shalt be destroyed! Now are the barons of Britain arrived; it is, Aurelie and Uther—now thou art thereof aware;—they shall come to-morrow, full truly, in this land at Totnes, I do thee well to wit, with seven hundred ships; and now they sail speedily in the sea. Thou hast much evil done to them, and now thou must the harm receive; thou hast on both sides bane that to thee shall seem; for now thy foes are before thee, and thy enemies behind. But flee, flee thy way, and save thy life—and flee whither that thou fleest, they will pursue after thee! Ambrosie Aurelie he shall have first this kingdom; but he through draught of poison shall suffer death. And afterwards shall Uther Pendragon have this kingdom; but thy kin shall kill him with poison; but ere he suffer death, he shall din (contest) make. Uther shall have a son, out of Cornwall he shall come, that shall be a wild boar, bristled with steel; the boar shall consume the noble burghs; he shall destroy (or devour) all the traitors with authority; he shall kill with death all thy rich kindred; he shall be man most brave, and noble in thought; hence into Rome this same shall rule; all his foes he shall fell to the ground. Sooth I have said to thee, but it is not to thee the softer;—but flee with thine host, thy foes come to thee to

thy court!" Then Merlin the wise ceased his words, and the king caused thirteen trumpets to be blown, and marched forth with his army exceeding quickly. There was not forth-right but space of one night, that the brothers came, both together, to the sea-strand full truly, at Dartmouth in Totnes.

The Britons heard this, and were full surely blithe; they drew themselves out of the woods, and out of the wilderness, by sixty, and by sixty, and by seven hundred, by thirty, and by thirty, and by many thousands—when they came together, full good it seemed to them! And the brothers brought to this land a numerous host, and here came before them these bold Britons, a numerous folk, who would it all avenge, that ere were over the woods wondrously scattered, through the mickle dread, and through the great misery, and through the mickle harm that Hengest wrought them, and who had murdered all their chief men with knives, with axes cut in pieces the good thanes! The Britons held husting with great wisdom; they took anon Aurelie, the elder brother, in the noble husting, and raised him to be king. Then were the Britons filled with bliss, blithe in mood who ere were mournful. These tidings came to Vortiger the king, that Aurelie was chosen and raised to be king. Then was Vortiger woe, and eft to him was worse! Vortiger proceeded far to a castle, named Genoure, upon a high mount; Cloard hight the mount, and Hergin hight the land, near the Wye, that is a fair water (stream). Vortiger's men took all that they came nigh; they took weapons and meat, on many a wise; to the castle they brought as much as they cared for, so that they had enow, though it little helped them. Aurehe and Uther were aware of Vortiger, where he was upon Cloard, inclosed in a castle. They caused trumpets to be blown, their host to be assembled—a numerous folk of many a land—they marched to Genoure, where Vortiger lay. A king was within, a king was without; knights there fought with fierce encounters; every good man made himself ready. When they saw that they had not the victory, then a wondrous great force went to the wood; they felled the wood down, and drew to the castle, and filled all the dyke that was wondrously deep. And fire they sent in, on every side, and called to Vortiger: "Now thou shalt warm thee there, for thou slewest Constance, who was king of this land, and afterwards Constantine his son. Now is Aurelie come, and Uther his brother, who send thee bale!" The wind wafted the fire, so that it burnt wonderfully; the castle gan to burn, the chambers there were consumed; the halls fell to the ground. Might no man there against the fire make fight; the fire went over all, and burnt house, and burnt wall; and the King Vortiger therein he gan to burn; all it was consumed that therein dwelt! Thus ended there, with mickle harm, Vortiger!

Then Aurelie had all the land in his hand. There was the strong earl, named Aldolf, he was of Gloucester, of all knights skilfullest; there in the land Aurehe made him his steward. Then had Aurelie, and Uther his brother, felled their foes, and were therefore the blither! Hengest heard this, strongest of all knights; then was he afraid exceeding greatly. He marched his host, and fled toward the Scots, and Aurelie the king went after him in haste. And Hengest thought that he would, with all his army, if men pursued him, flee into Scotland, so that he might thence with guile escape, if he might not for Aurelie remain in the land. Aurelie marched forth, and led his host right north, with all his might, full a se'nnight. The Britons were bold, and proceeded over the weald. Then had Aurelie a numerous force; he found ravaged land, the people slain, and all the churches burnt, and the Britons consumed. Then said Aurelie the king, Britain's darling: "If I might abide, that I should back ride; and if the Lord it will, who shaped the daylight, that I might in safety obtain my right (or country), churches I will arear, and God I will worship. I will give to each man his right, and to every person, the old and the young, I will be gracious, if God will grant to me my land to win!"

Tidings came to Hengest of Aurelie the king, that he brought an army of innumerable folk. Then spake Hengest, most treacherous of all knights: "Hearken now, my men—honour to you is given—here cometh Aurelie, and Uther eke, his brother; they bring very much folk, but all they are fated! For the king is unwise, so are his knights, and a knave is his brother, the one as the other; therefore may Britons be much the un-bolder, when the head (leader) is bad, the heap (multitude) is the worse. And well ye may it re-

member, what I will say; better are fifty of us, than of them five hundred—that they many times have found, since they in land sought the people. For known it is wide, of our bold feats, that we are chosen warriors with the best! We shall against them stand, and drive them from land, and possess this realm after our will!" Thus bold Hengest, fairest of all knights, emboldened his host, where he was in field, but otherwise it was disposed ere came the day a se'nnight. Forth came the tidings to Aurelie the king, where Hengest abode upon a mount.

Aurelie had for companions thirty thousand riders, bold Britons, who made their threat; and eke he had Welsh, wondrously many. Then caused he his knights to be ever weaponed, day and night, as if they should go to battle; for ever he had care of the heathen folk. And Aurelie with his host marched quickly towards him. When Hengest heard that Aurelie was near, he took his army, and marched against him. When Aurelie was aware that Hengest would come there, he went into a field, well weaponed under shield; he took forth-right ten thousand knights, that were the best born and chosen of his force, and set them in the field, on foot under shield. Ten thousand Welsh he sent to the wood; ten thousand Scots he sent aside, to meet the heathens by ways and by streets; himself he took his earls and his good warriors, and his faithfullest men, that he had in hand, and made his shield-troop, as it were a wild wood; five thousand there rode, who should all this folk well defend. Then called Aldolf, Earl of Gloucester, "If the Lord, that ruleth all dooms, grant it to me, that I might abide, that Hengest should come riding, who has in this land so long remained, and betrayed my dear friends with his long axes beside Ambresbury, with miserable death! But if I might of the earl win to me the country; then might I say my sooth words, that God himself had granted good to me, if I might fell my foes to ground anon, and avenge my dear kindred, whom they have laid adown!"

Scarcely was this speech said to the end, that they saw Hengest approach over the down. With a numerous host they fiercely marched, together soon they came, and terribly they slew, there the stern men together rushed themselves, helms there gan resound, knights there fell, steel went against the bones, mischief there was rife; streams of blood flowed in the ways; the fields were dyed, and the grass changed colour! When Hengest saw that his help failed him, then withdrew he from the fight, and fled aside, and his folk after speedily moved. The Christians pursued after, and laid on them, and called Christ, God's son, to be to them in aid; and the heathen people also called loud, "Our God Ter-vagant, why failest thou us now?" When Hengest saw the heathens recede, and the Christian men come upon them, then fled Hengest through and through, until he came to Coningsburgh; in the burgh he went, safety to obtain. And the King Aurelie went after him anon, and called to his people with loud voice: "Run ever forth and forth! Hengest is gone northwards!" And they pursued after him until they came to the burgh. When Hengest and his son saw all the host come after them, then said Hengest, of all knights wrathest, "Will I no more flee, but now I will fight, and my son Octa, and his wed-brother Ebissa! And all my army, stir ye your weapons, and march we against them, and make we strong slaughter! And if we fell them not, then be we dead, laid on the field, and deprived of friends!" Hengest marched on the weald, and left all his tents; and made his shield troop all of his heathen men. Then came Aurelie the king, and many thousands with him, and began there another fight, that was exceeding strong; there was many great stroke dealt in the comba! There were the Christians well nigh overcome. Then approached there five thousand riders, that Aurelie had on horse to fight; they smote on the heathens, so that they down fell; there was fight most strong, combat full stern!

In the fight came the Earl Aldolf of Gloucester, and found Hengest, wickedest of knights, where he fought fiercely, and felled the Christians. Aldolf drew his good sword, and upon Hengest smote; and Hengest cast the shield before him, and else were his life destroyed; and Aldolf smote on the shield, so that it was shivered in two. And Hengest leapt to him, as if it were a lion, and smote upon Aldolf's helm, so that it parted in two. Then hewed they with swords—the strokes were grim-fire flew from the steel, oft and well frequent! After a time, then leapt Aldolf to the ground,

and saw by him Gorlois, who was a keen man full truly; of Cornwall he was earl, he was widely known. Then was the baron Aldolf much the bolder, and heaved high his sword, and let it down swing, and smote Hengest on the hand, so that he let go his good brand; and in haste grasped him, with his grim looks, by the cuirasses hood that was on his head, and with great strength struck him down; and then he him up drew, as if he would crush him, and with arms embraced him, and forth him led. Now was Hengest taken, through Aldolf, the brave man! Then called Aldolf, the Earl of Gloucester: "Hengest, it is not so merry for thee now as it was whilom by Ambresbury, where thou drewest the axes, and slew the Britons, with much treachery thou slewest my kindred! Now thou shalt pay retribution, and lose thy friends; with cruel death perish in the world!" Hengest proceeded still (without speaking); he saw no help; Aldolf led him to his sovereign, and greeted the sovereign with loving words: "Hail be thou, Aurelie, of noble race! Here I bring before thee Hengest, the heathen, who was thy kindred's bane, who hath sought to us harm; God granted it to me, that I have him grasped! Now I give him to thee, for dearest of men art thou to me; and let thy attendants play with this hound, shoot with their arrows, and his race anon destroy!" Then answered the king with quick voice: "Blessed be thou, Aldolf, noblest of all earls! Thou art to me dear as my life, thou shalt be chief of people!" There men took Hengest, and there men bound Hengest; there was then Hengest of all knights most wretched! This fight was overcome, and the heathens fled. Then saw Octa, that his father was full woe; and with Ebissa, his wed brother, joined them together, and fled into York, with harm enow, and made ready the walls, and pulled down the halls. Some of the heathens went to the wood, where the folk on foot laid them to ground.

Then was Aurelie the king pleased well through all things; he proceeded into Coningsburgh, with all his folk, and thanked the Lord for such might. Three days and three nights the king dwelt there forth-right, to heal the wounds of his dear knights, and rest in the burgh their weary bones. When the third day came, and the folk had made none, then caused the king the trumpets to blow, and summoned his earls, that they should come to husting, to Aurelie the king. When they came together, the king asked them soon, what they would counsel him, who were his rich men, by what death Hengest should die, and how he might best avenge his dearest friends, who lay buried near Ambresbury.

Then stood up Eldadus, and with the king he spake thus; towards God he was good, he was a holy bishop, Aldolf the earl's brother, he had no other:—"Lord king, listen now to me, what I will thee tell. I will make the sentence, how he shall be put to death. For he is most hateful of men to us in the world, and hath slain our kindred, and deprived of life-day; and he is a heathen houndhell he shall seek; there he shall sink for his treachery! Lord king, hearken to me, what I thee will tell. A king was in Jerusalem, who was named Saul; and in heathendom was a king of mickle might, who was named Agag; Jerusalem he hated he was king of the Amalech; the Worse was full nigh to him! Ever he hated Jerusalem with harm the most; never would he give them peace, but ever he withstood them; he burnt them, he slew them, he did them sorrow enow! It fell on a time that the sun gan to shine; then sate Agag the king on his high chair; his fated blood was troubled, and urged him to march. He called his knights anon forth-right: 'Quick to your steeds! and forth we shall ride; we shall burn and slay all about Jerusalem!' Forth went the king, and a great host with him; the land they gan through-run, and the towns to consume. The men saw that who dwelt in Jerusalem; and they advanced against them, knights and swains, and fought with the king, and with fight him overcame, and slew all his folk, and Agag the king they took; and so they with him came to Saul the king. Then was Saul the king blithe through all things! The king asked counsel at his rich knights anon, which he might the better do to him, either slay or up hang. Then leapt up Samuel, a prophet of Israel; he was a man exceeding holy, high toward the Lord; no man knew in those days man so high in God's law. Samuel took Agag the king, and led him in the market-place, and caused him most fast to a stake to be bound; and took with his right hand a precious brand; and thus called to him Samuel, the good man: 'Thou high-

test Agag the king, now thou art in sorrow! Now thou shalt receive the retribution for that thou destroyedest Jerusalem, for that thou hast this noble burgh so greatly injured, and many a good man slain, and deprived of life-day! As I hope for mercy, shalt thou do so no more.' Samuel heaved up the sword, and strongly down struck, and cut the king all in pieces in Jerusalem's market, and threw the pieces wide over the streets. Thus Samuel took-on (acted), and so oughtest thou do to Hengest."

Aldolf heard this, the Earl of Gloucester; toward Hengest he leapt, as if it were a lion, and grasped him by the head, and after him hauled him, and drew him through and through, and through-out all Coningsburgh; and without the burgh he caused him to be bound. Aldolf drew his sword, and smote off Hengest's head; and the king took him forth-right, because he was so brave a knight, and laid him in earth, after the heathen law, and prayed for the soul, that it never were happy.

And now Aurelie the king caused a husting to be summoned, and caused trumpets to be blown, and his army to assemble—there was wondrous folk—and marched right to York, and inclosed Octa with his men there within. The king caused a dyke to be dug, all about York, that no man might there either go out or in. Octa saw that; therefore he was full woe. And his heathen folk, that he had in the burgh, they betook them to counsel, what they might do. And thus spake Octa with his companion Ebissa: "I have now bethought me, what I will do. I and my knights shall forth-right in our bare-breech go out of the burgh, hang on my neck a chain, and come to the king, praying his mercy. We all shall else be dead, except we follow this counsel." And, they all did so, as Octa them advised; put off their clothes the careful knights, and proceeded out of the burgh, miserable thanes, twain and twain, twenty hundred! Aurelie beheld this, noblest of kings, strange it seemed to him of the naked knights. Together came the host that lay over the land; they saw Octa naked come, that was Hengest's son. He bare in his hand a long chain; he came to the king, and before his warriors he fell upon the ground, and the king's feet sought; and these words then said Hengest's son Octa: "Mercy, my lord king, through God the mild; for the love of God Almighty have mercy of my knights! For all our heathendom is become base, our laws and our people, for loathsome we are to the Lord. For us has failed in hand Appolin, and Tervagant, Woden, and Mercurius, Jupiter, and Saturnus, Venus, and Didon, Frea, and Mamilon, and all our beliefs are now to us odious, but we will believe on thy dear Lord, for all it faileth us now in hand, that we worshipped. We yearn thy favour, now and evermore; if thou wilt me grant peace, and if thou wilt me grant amity, we will draw to thee, and be thy faithful men; love thy people, and hold thy laws, if thou wilt not that, do thy will, whetherso (whatsoever) thou wilt do, or slay us or up hang us."

And the king was mild-hearted, and held him still; he beheld on the right hand, he beheld on the left hand, which of his wise men first would speak. They all were still, and kept silence with voice; was there no man so high, that durst a word utter; and ever lay Octa at the king's feet so; all his knights lay behind him. Then spake Aldadus, the good bishop, and said thus: "Ever it was, and ever it shall be, and yet it behoveth us, when we yearn mercy, that we should have mercy; worthy is he of mercy, who worthily prayeth for it. And thou thyself, lord king, thou art chief of the people, pardon thou Octa, and also his companions, if they will receive Christendom with good belief; for yet it may befall, in some country that they may fitly worship the Lord. Now stands all this kingdom in thine own hand, give them a place, where it shall be agreeable to thee, and take of them hostages, such as thou wilt require; and let them be well held in iron bonds; the hostages be found meat and clothes, be found all that to them shall belief; and then mightest thou well hold this people in thy land, and let them till the land, and live by their tilth. And if it subsequently shall befall, soon thereafter, that they fail in hand to hold troth, and weaken in work, and withstand thee, now I decree to thee the doom, what thou mayest then do. Cause men to ride to them exceeding quickly, and cause them all to be destroyed, slain and eke up hung. This I decree to thee; the Lord it hear!" Then answered the king, with quick voice: "All I will so do as thou hast deemed." Thus spake the king then: "Arise up, Octa; thou shalt quickly do

well, receive Christendom." There was Octa baptised, and his companions also; and all his knights on the spot forth-right. They took their hostages, and gave to the king, three-and-fifty children they delivered to the king. And the king sent them beside Scotland; oaths they swore, that they would not deceive him. The king gave them in hand sixty hides of land, thereon they dwelt well many winters.

The king was in York, good it seemed to him; he took his messengers, and sent over all his land, and ordered his bishops, his book-learned men, earls and thanes, to come towards him, to Aurelie the king, to a great husting. It soon came to pass, that they came together. The king greeted his folk with his fair words, he welcomed earls, he welcomed barons, and the bishops, and the book-learned men.—"I will say to you with sooth words, why I sent after you, and for what thing. Here I give to each knight his land and his right, and to every earl and every baron, what he may win, to possess it with joy; and each man I order to love peace, on his life. And I bid you all to work and build the churches that are fallen, to let the bells ring, to sing God's praise, and each with our might to worship our dear Lord; each man by his might to hold peace and amity, and cause the land to be tilled, now it is all in my hand." When this doom was all said, they all praised this counsel. The king gave them leave to depart thence; each fared homeward, as to them it best seemed.

Full seven nights the king lay there still, and then he gan proceed into London, to gladden the burgh-folk, who oft were busy. He caused walls to be strengthened, he caused halls to be built, and all the works to be righted that ere were broken; and gave them all the laws that stood in their elders' days; and he made there revels, to rule the folk. And thence he gan proceed right to Winchester; and there he caused to be worked halls and churches;—there it seemed to him most pleasant;—and afterwards he went to Ambresbury, to the burial-place of his dear friends, whom Hergest with knives had murdered there. He caused men anon to be inquired for, who could hew stone, and eke good wrights, who could work with axe, he thought to work there a work wondrously fair, that ever should last, the while men lived! Then was in Caerleon a bishop, that hight Tremoriun; he was a man exceeding wise in the worlds-realm; with the king he was, over the weald. And thus Tremoriun, God's servant, spake there with the king, of a good thing: "Listen now to me, Aurelie, what I will make known to thee, and I will say to thee the best of all counsel, if thou wilt it approve, eft it will like to thee. We have a prophet, who is Merlin named; if any man might him find, upon this weald, and bring him to thee, through any kind of thing, and if thou his will wouldest perform, he would say to thee best of all counsel, how thou mightest this work make strong and stark, that ever might last, the while that men lived." Then answered the king—these words were to him agreeable:—"Dear friend Tremoriun, all this I will do." The king in haste sent his messengers over all his kingdom, and bade every man to ask after Merlin; and if men might him find, to bring him to the king, he would give him land, both silver and gold, and in the worlds-realm perform his will. The messengers gan to ride wide and far; some they went right north, and some they went right south; some they went right east, and some they went right west, some they went anon, so that they came to Alaban, that is a fair well in Welsh land. The well he (Merlin) much loved, and oft therein bathed him; the knights him found where he sate by the strand. So soon as they him met, they greeted him fair; and thus said the two knights to him forth-right: "Hail be thou, Merlin, wisest of men! By us he who is a goodly king, named Aurelie, noblest of all kings, greets thee, and he beseecheth thee courteously, that thou come to him; and he will give land to thee, both silver and gold, if thou in the realm wilt counsel the king." Then answered Merlin, what to the knights was full woe: "I reck not of his land, his silver, nor his gold, nor his clothes, nor his horses; myself I have enow." Then sate he still a long time. These knights were afraid, that he would flee. When it all brake forth, it was good that he spake: "Ye are two knights come right here; yesterday ere noon I knew that ye should come, and if I so would, ye might not have found me. Ye bring me greeting from Aurelie the king. I knew his qualities ere he came to land, and I knew the other, Uther his brother; I knew both ere they were born, though

I never saw either with eye. But alas! alas! that it is so ordered, that the monarch may not live long! But now will I go, and be your companion; to the king I will proceed, and perform his will."

Forth went Merlin, and the knights with him, so long that they came to the sovereign. The good tidings came to the king; never ere in his life was the king so blithe, for ever any kind of man that came to him! The king went to his steed, and out gan him ride, and all his knights with him, to welcome Merlin. The king him met, and greeted him fair, he embraced him, he kissed him, he made him his familiar. Great was the mirth among the people, all for Merlin's arrival, who was son of no man. Alas! that in the world was no wise man that ever knew here whose son he were, but the Lord alone, who surveys (or explores) all clean! The king led to chamber Merlin who was dear; and he gan ask him anon with his fair words, that he should cause him to understand of the world's course, and of all the years that were to come, for it were to him greatly in will, that he thereof knew. Merlin then answered, and to the king said thus: "O Aurelie, the king, thou askest me a strange thing, look that thou no more such thing inquire. For my spirit truly is wrathful, that is in my breast; and if I among men would make boast, with gladness, with game, with goodly words, my spirit would wrath himself, and become still, and deprive me of my sense, and my wise words fore-close, then were I dumb of every sentence. But leave all such things," quoth Merlin to the king, "for whensoever need shall come to ever any people, and man will beseech me with mildness, and I may with my will dwell still, then may I say, how it afterwards shall happen. But I will counsel thee of thy nearest need, and say to thee right here what thou hast in heart. A plain is by Ambresbury, that is broad, and exceeding pleasant, there was thy kindred deprived of life with knives, there was many bold Briton betrayed to the death; and thinkest to greet the place with worship, and with surprising works to honour the dead, that there shall ever stand, to the world's end. But thou hast never any man, that knows aught thereon, who can make a work that never will fail. But I will counsel thee at such need, for I know a work with wonder encompassed, far the work standeth in Ireland. It is a most surprising thing, it is named the Giant's Ring, the work is of stone, such another there is none, so wide as is the worlds-realm is no work its like. The stones are great, and virtue they have; the men who are sick they go to the stones, and they wash the stones, and therewith bathe their bones; after a little while they become all sound! But the stones are mickle, and immensely great; for was never any man born, in every any burgh, who might with strength bring the stones thence." Then answered the king: "Merlin, thou sayest strange thing, that never any man born may bring them thence, nor with any strength carry from the place, how might I then bring them hence?" Then answered Merlin to the king who spake with him: "Yes, yes, lord king, it was of yore said, that better is art, than evil strength; for with art men may hold what strength may not obtain. But assemble thine army, and go to the land, and lead thou with thee a good host; and I will go with thee thy worship will be the more! Ere thou back come, thy will thou shalt have, and the work thou shalt bring with thee to this land, and so thou shalt carry it to the burial-place, and honour the spot where thy friends lie. And thou thyself shalt therein thy bones rest; when thy life endeth, there shalt thou rest." Thus said Merlin, and afterwards he sate still, as though he would from the world depart. The king caused him to be brought into a fair chamber, and dwell therein, after his will.

Aurche the king caused a husting to be summoned from all the lands that stood in his hand; he bade them counsel him at such need. And his noble barons they well advised him, that he should do the counsel that Merlin had said to him. But they would not lead the king out of this land, but they chose them for chief Uther the good, and fifteen thousand knights, weaponed fair, of bold Britons, who thither should go. When this army was all ready, then began they to fare with all the best ships that by the sea stood, and voyaged so long that they came to Ireland. And the brave knights took the haven, they went upon the sea-strand, and beheld Ireland. Then spake Merlin, and discoursed with words: "See ye now, brave men, the great hill, the hill so exceeding high, that to the welkin it is full high? That is the marvellous thing, it is named the Giant's Ring, to each work unlike—it came from Africa. Pitch

your tents over all these fields, here we shall rest for the space of three days; on the fourth day we shall march hence toward the hill, where our will is. But we shall first refresh us, and assemble our warriors, make ready our weapons, for well they behave us (we shall need them).” Thus it remained, and there lay the army.

Then possessed Ireland a king that was most strong; he hight Gillomaur, he was lord of the people, the tidings came to him that the Britons were in the land, he caused forces to be summoned over all Ireland’s territory, and he gan to threaten greatly, that he would all drive them out. When the word came to him, what the Britons would do there, and that they came for that only, to fetch the stones, then the King Gillomar made mickle derision and scorn, and said that they were foolish fellows, who over the broad sea were thither arrived, to seek these stones, as if none were in their land; and swore by Saint Brandan:—“They shall not carry away one stone, but for love of the stones they shall abide the most of all mischiefs; spill their blood out of their bellies—and so men shall teach them (they shall be taught) to seek stones! And afterwards I will go into Britain, and say to the King Aurelie, that my stones I will defend, and unless the king be still, and do my will, I will in his land with fight withstand, make him waste paths, and wildernesses many; widows enow—there husbands shall die!” Thus the unwise king played with words, but it all happened another wise, other than he weened. His army was ready, and forth they gan march, so long that they came whereon the Britons lay. Together they came, and hardly encountered, and fought fiercely—the fated fell! But the Irish were bare, and the Britons in armour, the Irish fell, and covered all the fields. And the King Gillomar gan him to flee there, and fled forth-right, with twenty of his knights, into a great wood-of worship bereaved-his Irish folk was felled with steel. Thus was the king shamed, and thus he ended his boast, and thus went to the wood, and let his folk fall! The Britons beheld the dead over the fields; seven thousand there lay deprived of life. The Britons went over the fields to their tents, and worthily looked to (or took care of) their good weapons, and there they gan to rest, as Merlin counselled them.

On the fourth day then gan they to march, and proceeded to the hill, all well weaponed, where the marvellous work stood, great and most strong! Knights went upward, knights went downward, knights went all about, and earnestly beheld it, they saw there on the land the marvellous work stand. There were a thousand knights with weapons well furnished, and all the others to wit guarded well their ships. Then spake Merlin, and discoursed with the knights: “Knights, ye are strong, these stones are great and long, ye must go nigh, and forcibly take hold of them; ye must wreath them fast with strong sail-ropes, shove and heave with utmost strength trees great and long, that are exceeding strong, and go ye to one stone, all clean, and come again with strength, if ye may it stir.” But Merlin wist well how it should happen. The knights advanced with mickle strength; they laboured full greatly, but they had not power, so that they ever any stone might stir! Merlin beheld Uther, who was the king’s brother, and Merlin the prophet said these words: “Uther, draw thee back, and assemble thy knights, and stand ye all about, and diligently behold, and be ye all still, so that no man there stir ere I say to you now anon how we shall commence, “Take ye each a stone.” Uther drew him back, and assembled his knights, so that none there remained near the stones, as far as a man might cast a stone. And Merlin went about, and diligently gan behold, thrice he went about, within and without, and moved his tongue as if he sung his beads. Thus did Merlin there, then called he Uther: “Uther, come quickly, and all thy knights with thee, and take ye these stones all, ye shall not leave one; for now ye may heave them like feather balls; and so ye shall with counsel carry them to our ships.” These stones they carried away, as Merlin counselled them, and placed them in their ships, and sailed forth to wit, and so they gan proceed into this land, and brought them on a plain that is wondrously broad, broad it is and most pleasant, near Ambresbury, where Hengest betrayed the Britons with axes. Merlin gan rear them, as they ere stood, so never any other man could do the craft, nor ever ere there-before was any man so wise born, that could the work raise, and the stones dispose.

The tidings came to the king in the north end, of Merlin’s pro-

ceeding, and of Uther, his brother, that they were with safety come to this land, and that the work was all disposed, and set up right. The king was in breast wondrously blithe; and caused a husting to be summoned, so wide as was all his land, that all his merry folk so very joyous should come to Ambresbury, all his people, at Whitsunday, and the king would be there, and honour the place. Thither came Aurelie the king, and all his folk with him, on Whitsunday he there made a feast, as I will thee tell in this book-story. There were on the weald tents raised, on the broad plain, nine thousand tents. All the Whitsunday the king on the plain lay; ordered the place to be hallowed, that hight Stonehenge. Full three days the king dwelt still; on the third day, his people he highly honoured; he made two bishops, wondrously good, Saint Dubriz at Kaerleon, and Saint Samson at York; both they became holy, and with God high. On the fourth day people separated, and so a time it stood in the same wise.

The yet there was a wicked man, Pascent, Vortiger’s son; was the same Pascent gone into Welsh land, and there in the same days was become outlaw. But he durst not long dwell there, for Aurelie and for Uther; but he procured good ships, and went by the sea flood, into Germany he proceeded, with five hundred men, and there he won much folk, and made a fleet, and voyaged so long that he came to this land, into the Humber, where he harm wrought. But he durst not long remain in the territory. The king marched thitherward, and Pascent fled awayward, by sea so long that he came to Ireland.

Soon he found there the king of the land, his heart was very sore, he greeted the King Gillomar with God’s greeting: “Hail be thou, Gillomar, chief of men! I am to thee come; I was Vortiger’s son; my father was Britain’s king, he loved thee through all things. And if thou wouldest now be my companion, as we shall agree, and my father well avenge, and well avenge thy folk that Uther here killed, and thy marvellous work, that he hence drew. And eke I heard say, where I voyaged in the sea, that the King Aurelie is become sick, and lieth in Winchester, in bed full fast. Thou mayest believe me enow, for this is verily sooth.” Thus Pascent and Gillomar made their compact there; oaths they swore, many and innumerable, that they would set all this land in their two (joint) hands; the oaths were sworn, but eft they were broken! The king gathered a host wide over his land; to the sea they are gone, Gillomar and Pascent; into the ships they went, and forth let them glide. Forth they proceeded quickly, so that they came to Meneve, that was in that time a town exceeding fair, that men now truly call Saint David’s. There they took haven with great bliss; the ships went on the strand, the knights went on the land. Then said Pascent-toward Gillomar he went—“Say me, King Gillomar, now we are come here; now I set to thee in hand half-part this kingdom; for there is from Winchester come to me a knight’s son, and saith to me such advice, that Aurelie will be dead, the sickness is under his ribs, so that he may not live. Here we shall well avenge our kindred, and win his territories, as to us shall be best of all.”

To the king came the word, into Winchester, that Pascent and Gillomar were come here with an army. The king called Uther, who was his dear brother:—“Uther, summon forces over all this land, and march to our enemies, and drive them from land; either thou them disperse, either thou them fell. And I would eke fare, if I were not so sick; but if I may be sound I will come after thee soon.” Uther did all as the king said to him there. And Pascent at Saint David’s wrought thereby much sorrow; and to the king Gillomar much sorrow he did there; Britain they through-ran, harried and burnt. And Uther in this land assembled his host, and it was long time ere he might march aright. And Pascent set in his own hand all West Welsh land.

It was on a day, his people were blithe, there arrived Appas—the fiends him conveyed! To Pascent he quoth thus: “Come hither to us. I will thee tell of a joyful tiding. I was at Winchester, with thine adversaries, where the king lieth sick, and sorrowful in heart. But what shall be my meed, if I thither ride, and I so gratify thee, that I kill him?” Then answered Pascent, and toward Appas he went: “I promise thee to-day a hundred pounds, for I may, if thou me so gratifiest, that thou kill him.” Troth they plight this treachery to contrive. Appas went to his chamber, and this mischief meditated; he was a heathen man, out of Saxland come. Monk’s

clothes he took on, he shaved his crown upon; he took to him two companions, and forth he gan proceed, and went anon right into Winchester, as if it were a holy man—the heathen devil! He went to the burgh-gate, where the king lay in chamber, and greeted the door-keeper with God’s greeting; and bade him in haste go into the king, and say to him in sooth, that Uther his brother had sent him thither a good leech; the best leech that dwelt in any land, that ever any sick man out of sickness can bring. Thus he lied, the odious man, to the monarch, for Uther was gone forth with his army, nor ever him saw Uther, nor thither him sent! And the king weened that it were sooth, and believed him enow. Who would ween that he were traitor!—for on his bare body he wore a cuirass, thereupon he had a loathly hair-cloth, and then a cowl of a black cloth; he had blackened his body, as if smutted with coal! He kneeled to the king, his speech was full mild: “Hail be thou, Aurelie, noblest of all kings! Hither me sent Uther, that is thine own brother; and I all for God’s love am here to thee come. For I will heal, and all whole thee make, for Christ’s love, God’s son; I reckon not any treasure, nor meed of land, nor of silver nor of gold, but to each sick person I do it for love of my Lord.” The king heard this, it was to him most agreeable;—but where is ever any man in this middle-earth, that would this ween, that he were traitor! He took his glass vessel anon, and the king urined therein; a while after that, the glass vessel in hand he took, and viewed it forth-right before the king’s knights; and thus said anon Appas, the heathen man: “If ye will me believe, ere to-morrow eve this king shall be all whole, healed at his will.” Then were blithe all that were in chamber. Appas went in a chamber, and the mischief meditated, and put thereto poison, that hight scamony, and came out forth-right among the chamber-knights, and to the knights he gan to distribute much camel, and gingiver and liquorice he gave them lovingly. They all took the gift, and he deceived them all. This traitor fell on his knees before the monarch, and thus said to him: “Lord, now thou shalt receive this, of this drink a part, and that shall be thy cure.” And the king up drank, and there the poison he drank. Anon as he had drank, the leech laid him down. Thus said Appas to the chamber-knights: “Wrap now the king well, that he lie in sweating; for I say to you through all things, all whole shall your king be. And I will go to my inn, and speak with my men, and at the midnight I will come again forth-right, with other leechcraft, that shall be to him healing.” Forth went—the king lay in slumber—the traitor Appas to his inn, and spake with his men; and with stilly counsel stole from the town.

At the midnight then sent the chamber-knights six of their men to Appas’s inn; they weened to find him, and bring him to the king. Then was he flown, and the fiends him carried! The men came back where the king dwelt, and made known in the chamber of Appas’s departure. Then might men see sorrow enow be! Knights fell down, and yearned their deaths; there was mickle lamentation and heart-groaning, there was many a piteous speech, there was yell of men! They leapt to the bed, and beheld the king; the yet he lay in slumber, and in great sweat. The knights with weeping awakened the king, and they called to him with mild voice: “Lord, how is it with thee? how is thy harm? For now is our leech departed without leave, gone out of court, and left us as wretches.” The king gave them answer: “I am all over swollen, and there is no other hap, now anon I shall be dead. And I bid forth-right, ye who are my knights, that ye greet Uther, who is my own brother, and bid him hold my land in his sway. God himself through all things let him be a good king! And bid him be keen, and always deem right, as a father to the poor folk, to the destitute for comfort;—then may he hold the land in power. And now to-day, when I be dead, take ye all one counsel, and cause me to be brought right to Stonehenge, where lie much of my kindred, by the Saxons killed. And send for bishops, and book-learned men; my gold and silver distribute for my soul, and lay me at the east end, in Stonehenge.” There was no other haphere was the king dead! And all so his men did as the king directed. Uther was in Wales, and hereof was nothing ware, never through any art hereof nothing wist; nevertheless he had with him the prophet Merlin, he proceeded towards the army that was come to the land.

Uther lay in Wales, in a wilderness, and prepared to march, to fight with Pascent. Then in the eventime, the moon gan to shine,

well nigh all as bright as the sunlight. Then they saw afar a marvellous star; it was broad, it was large, it was immense! From it came gleams terribly shining, the star is named in Latin, comet. Came from the star a gleam most fierce; at this gleam’s end was a dragon fair, from this dragon’s mouth came gleams enow! But twain there were mickle, unlike to the others; the one drew toward France, the other toward Ireland. The gleam that toward France drew, it was itself bright enow; to Munt-Giu was seen the marvellous token! The gleam that stretched right west, it was disposed in seven beams. Uther saw this—but he was not hereof wary—sorrow was to him in heart, and strangely he was frightened; so was all the great folk that was in the host. Uther called Merlin, and bade him come to him, and thus said to him with very soft words: “Merlin, Merlin, dear friend, prove thyself, and say to us of the token that we have seen; for I wot not in the worlds-realm to what end it shall befall; unless thou us counsel, back we must ride.”

Merlin sate him still, a long time, as if he with dream full greatly laboured. They said who saw it with their own eyes, that oft he turned him, as if it were a worm! At length he gan to awake, then gan he to quake, and these words said Merlin the prophet: “Wal-away! Walaway! in this worlds-realm, much is the sorrow that is come to the land! Where art thou, Uther? Set before me here, and I will say to thee of sorrows enow. Dead is Aurelie, noblest of kings, so is the other, Constance, thy brother, whom Vortiger betrayed with his treachery. Now hath Vortiger’s kin killed Aurelie; now art thou alone of thy noble kindred. But hope not thou for counsel of them that he dead, but think of thyself—prosperity shall be given to thee;—for seldom he faileth, who to himself thinketh. Thou shalt become good king, and lord of men. And thou at the midnight weapon thy knights, that we in the morning-light may come forth-right, before Meneve—there thou shalt fight; ere thou thence depart, slaughter thou shalt make; for thou shalt both slay there, Pascent and Gillomar, and many thousands of the men that are with them hither come. The token of the star, that we saw so far, sooth it is, Uther dear, that betokened thy brother’s death. Before the star was the dragon, to each worm unlike; the token was on thy half, that was thou, Uther, thyself! Thou shalt have this land, and thy authority be great and strong. Such tokens are marvellous that came of the dragon’s mouth, two gleams proceeded forth that were wondrously light. The one stretched far south, out over France—that signifies a powerful son, that of thy body shall come, who shall win many kingdoms with conflict, and in the end he shall rule many a nation. The other gleam that stretched west, wondrously light, that shall be a daughter, that to thee shall be exceeding dear. The gleams that gan to spread in seven fair strings, are seven fair sons, who shall come of thy daughter, who shall win to their own hand many a kingdom; they shall be well strong, on water and on land. Now thou hast of me heard what will thee help, quickly forth-right march to thy fight.” And Merlin gan to slumber, as if he would sleep.

Up arose Uther, now he was wise and wary, and ordered his knights forth-right to horse, and ordered them quickly to proceed to Meneve; and all their expedition (or forces) to prepare, as if they should fight. In the troop before he had knights well chosen; seven thousand knights, brave men and active. He had in the middle knights well beseen, other seven thousand good thanes. He had behind brave knights eighteen thousand, brave warriors, and of folk on foot so many thousands, that in no speech might any man tell them! Forth they marched quickly, until they came to Meneve.

There saw Gillomar where Uther came to him, and commanded his knights to weapon them forth-right. And they very speedily grasped their knives, and off with their breeches—strange were their looks—and grasped in their hands their long spears, and hung on their shoulders great battle-axes. Then said Gillomar the king a thing very strange:—“Here cometh Uther, Aurelie’s brother; he will ask my peace, and not fight with me. The foremost are his swains; march we against them; ye need never reek, though ye slay the wretches! For if Uther, Constantine’s son, will here become my man, and give to Pascent his father’s realm, I will him grant peace, and let him live, and in fair bonds lead him to my land.” The king spake thus, the while worse him befell!

Uther’s knights were in the town forth-right, and laid fire in the

town, and fought sharply; with swords rushed towards them; and the Irish were naked. When the Irish men saw, that the Britons were in conflict, they fought fiercely, and nevertheless they fell; they called on their king: "Where art thou, nothing! why wilt thou not come hither? thou lettest us here be destroyed;—and Pascent, thy comrade, saw us fall here;—come ye to us to help, with great strength!" Gillomar heard this; therefore his heart was sore; with his Irish knights he came to the fight, and Pascent forth with him—both they were fated! When Uther saw, that Gillomar was there come, to him he gan ride, and smote him in the side, so that the spear through pierced, and glided to the heart. Hastily he passed by him, and overtook Pascent; and said these words Uther the good: "Pascent, thou shalt abide; here cometh Uther riding!" He smote him upon the head, so that he fell down, and the sword put in his mouth—such meat to him was strange—so that the point of the sword went in the earth. Then said Uther: "Pascent, lie now there; now thou hast Britain all won to thy hand! So is now hap to thee; therein thou art dead; dwell ye shall here, thou, and Gillomar thy companion, and possess well Britain! For now I deliver it to you in hand, so that ye may presently dwell with us here; ye need not ever dread who you shall feed!" Thus said Uther, and afterwards he there ran, and drove the Irish men over waters and over fens, and slew all the host that with Pascent came to land. Some to the sea fled, and leapt into their ships; with weather and with water there they perished! Thus they sped here, Pascent and Gillomar. Now was this fight done; and Uther back came, and forth-right marched into Winchester.

In a broad way he gan meet three knights and their swains, who came toward him. Anon as they met him, fair they him greeted: "Hail be thou, Uther; these territories are thine own. Dead is Aurelie, noblest of kings; he hath set to thee in hand all his regal land; he bade thee be in prosperity, and think of his soul." Then wept Uther wondrously much there. Uther proceeded forth-right into Winchester; then were before him, without the burgh, all the burghers with piteous cries. So soon as they saw him, they said to him: "Uther, thy favour, now and evermore! Our king we have lost, woe is to us therefore. Thou wert his brother—he had no other, nor he had no son, who might become king. But take thou the crown, it is thy right, and we will help thee, and hold for lord, with weapons and with goods, and with all our might." Uther heard this; he was wise and he was aware, that there was no other course, since his brother was dead. He took the crown, that came to him exceeding well, and he worthily became king, and held good laws, and loved his folk. Whilst that he was king, and chose his ministers, Merlin disappeared; he knew not ever whither he went, nor ever in the worlds-realm what became of him. Woe was the king, so was all his people, and all his courtiers were therefore mourning. The king caused men to ride wide and far; he offered gold and treasure to each travelling man, whosever might find Merlin in the land thereto he laid mickle praise, but he heard no whit of him. Then bethought Uther, what Merlin said to him ere, in the expedition into Welsh land, where they saw the dragon, to each worm incomparable, and he thought of the tokens that Merlin taught him. The king was exceeding sorry, and sorrowful in heart, for he lost never a dearer man, since he was alive, never any other, not even Aurelie, his brother. The king caused to be worked two images, two golden dragons, all for Merlin's love—so greatly he desired his coming. When the dragons were ready, the one was his companion, wheresoever he in the land led his army, it was his standard, in every hap, the other he worthily gave into Winchester, into the bishop's see, where he stead holdeth. Thereto he gave his good spear, wherewith men should bear the dragon, when men should carry relics at processions. The Britons saw this, these dragons that were thus made, ever since they called Uther, who for a standard bare the dragon, the name they laid on him, that was Uther Pendragon; Pendragon in British, Dragon's-head in English.

Now was Uther their good king, but of Merlin he had nothing. This word heard Octa, where he dwelt northward, and Ebissa his wed-brother, and Ossa the other, that Aurelie sent thither, and set them there in his peace, and gave them in hand sixty hides of land. Octa heard full truly all how it was transacted, of Aurehe's death, and of Uther's kingdom. Octa called to him his kin that

was nearest, they betook them to counsel, of their old deeds, that they would by their life desert Christendom. They held husting, and became heathens, then came there together, of Hengest's kindred, five and sixty hundred of heathen men. Soon was the word reported and over the land known, that Octa, Hengest's son, was become heathen, and all these same men to whom Aurelie had granted peace. Octa sent his messengers into Welsh land, after the Irish that from Uther were fled, and after the Alemaings (Germans), that away were drawn, that were gone to the wood, the while men slew Pascent, and hid them well everywhere, the while men slew Gillomar, the folk out of the wood drew, and toward Scotland proceeded. There came ever more and more, and proceeded toward Octa, when they together were all come, then were there thirty thousand, without the women, of Hengest's kin. They took their host, and forth gan to fare, and set all in their hand beyond the Humber, and the people, where they gan march, there was a marvellous host! And they proceeded right to York, and on each side the heathen people gan ride about the burgh, and the burgh besieged, and took it all in their hand, forth into Scotland, all that they saw they accounted their own. But Uther's knights who were in the castle, defended the town within, so that they might never get within, in no place heard any one, of few men that did so well!

So soon as Uther of this thing was aware, he assembled a strong army, over all his kingdom, and he very speedily marched toward York, proceeded forth-right anon, where Octa him lay. Octa and his forces marched against them; encountered them together with grim strength, hewed hardly, helms resounded; the fields were dyed with the blood of the slain, and the heathen souls hell sought! When the day's end arrived, then was it so evilly done, that the heathen folk had the upper hand, and with great strength routed the Britons, and drove them to a mount that was exceeding strong. And Uther with his men drew to the mount, and had lost in the fight his dear knights, full seven hundred—his hap was the worse! The mount hight Dunian, that Uther was upon, the mount was overgrown with a fair wood. The king was there within with very many men, and Octa besieged him with the heathen men night and day—besieged him all about, woe was to the Britons! Woe was the King Uther, that he was not ere aware, that he had not in land better understood. Oft they went to counsel of such need, how they might overcome Octa, Hengest's son.

There was an earl Gorlois, bold man full truly-knight he was good, he was Uther's man,—Earl of Cornwall, known he was wise—he was a very wise man, in all things excellent. To him said Uther, sorry in heart: "Hail be thou, Gorlois, lord of men! Thou art mine own man, and very well I thee treat; thou art knight good, great is thy wisdom, all my people I put in thy counsel, and all we shall work after thy will." Then hung he his brows down, the King Uther Pendragon, and stood him full still, and bade Gorlois say his will. Then answered Gorlois, who was courteous full truly, "Say me, Uther Pendragon, why bowest thou thy head down? Knowest thou not that God alone is better than we all clean? He may to whomsoever he will give worship. Promise we him in life that we will not him deceive, and let we counsel us of our misdeeds. Each man forth-right take shrift of all his sins, each man shrive other, as if it were his brother, and every good knight take on him much shrift, and God we shall promise to amend our sins. And at the midnight prepare us to fight, these heathen hounds account us all here bound. Octa, Hengest's son, weeneth that we are all taken, they he in these fields covered in their tents, they are very weary of carrying their weapons, now anon they shall slumber, and afterwards sleep; of us they have no care, that we will march against them. At the midnight we shall forth-right go exceeding still, down from this hill, be no knight so mad, that he ask any word, nor ever any man be so mad, that he blow horn. But we shall step to them as if we would steal, ere they are aware, we shall destroy them, we shall approach to them, and tell them tidings. And let every brave man strongly lay on them, and so we shall drive the foreigners from the land, and with the might of our Lord, win our rights." All this host did as Gorlois had bid them, each man forth-right put him under shrift promised to do good, and Uther Pendragon foremost went down, and all his knights, exceeding still, and smote in the wealds, among all the tents, and slew the heathens with great strength, slew over the fields the

yellow locks, of folk it was most wretched, they drew along their bowels, with much destruction they fell to the ground.

And there was forth-right captured Octa, Hengest's son, and his wed-brother Ebissa, and his comrade Ossa. The king caused them to be bound with iron bands, and delivered them to sixty knights, who were good in fight, fast to hold over the weald. And he himself drove him forth, and made much din, and Gorlois the fair, forth on the other side, and all their knights ever forth-right slew downright all that they came nigh. Some they crept to the wood on their bare knees, and they were on the morrow most miserable of all folk. Octa was bound, and led to London, and Ebissa, and Ossa—was never to them such woe.

This fight was all done, and the king forth marched into Northumberland with great bliss, and afterwards to Scotland, and set it all in his own hand. He established peace, he established quiet, that each man might journey with from land to land, though he bare gold in his hand, of peace he did such things, that no king might ever ere, from that time that the Britons here arrived. And then, after a time, he proceeded to London, he was there at Easter, with his good folk, blithe was the London's town, for Uther Pendragon. He sent his messengers over all his kingdom, he bade the earls, he bade the churls, he bade the bishops, and the book learned men, that they should come to London, to Uther the king, into London's town, to Uther Pendragon. Rich men soon to London came; they brought wife, they brought child, as Uther the king commanded. With much goodness the king heard mass, and Gorlois, the Earl of Cornwall, and many knights with him; much bliss was in the town, with King Uther Pendragon. When the mass was sung, to the hall they crowded, trumpets they blew, boards they spread, all the folk ate and drank, and bliss was among them.

There sate Uther the king in his high chair; opposite to him Gorlois, fair knight full truly, the Earl of Cornwall, with his noble wife. When they were all seated, the earls to their meat, the king sent his messengers to Ygaerne the fair, Gorlois the earl's wife, woman fairest of all. Oft he looked on her, and glanced with his eyes, oft he sent his cup-bearers forth to her table, oft he laughed at her, and made glances to her, and she him lovingly beheld—but I know not whether she loved him. The king was not so wise, nor so far prudent, that among his folk he could his thoughts hide. So long the king this practised, that Gorlois became him wrath, and angered him greatly with the king, because of his wife. The earl and his knights arose forth-right, and went forth with the woman, knights most wrath. King Uther saw this, and herefore was sorry, and took him forth-right twelve wise knights, and sent after Gorlois, chieftain of men, and bade him come in haste to the king, and do the king good right, and acknowledge his fault, that he had disgraced the king, and from his board had departed, he, and his knights, with mickle wrong, for the king was cheerful with him, and for he hailed (drank health) to his wife. And if he would not back come, and acknowledge his guilt, the king would follow after him, and do all his might, take from him all his land, and his silver, and his gold. Gorlois heard this, lord of men, and he answer gave, wrathest of earls: "Nay, so help me the Lord, that formed the daylight, will I never back come, nor yearn his peace, nor shall he ever in life disgrace me of my wife! And say ye to Uther the king, at Tintateol he may find me, if he thither will ride, there will I abide him, and there he shall have hard game, and mickle world's shame." Forth proceeded the earl, angry in his mood, he was wrath with the king wondrously much, and threatened Uther the king, and all his thanes with him. But he knew not what should come subsequently, soon thereafter.

The earl proceeded anon into Cornwall; he had there two castles inclosed most fast, the castles were good, and belonged to the race of his ancestors. To Tintateol he sent his mistress who was so fair, named Ygaerne, best of all women; and he inclosed her fast in the castle. Ygaerne was sorry, and sorrowful in heart, that so many men for her should there have destruction. The earl sent messengers over all Britain, and bade each brave man, that he should come to him, for gold and for silver, and for other good gifts, that they full soon should come to Tintateol, and bade his own knights to come forth-right. When they were together, the good thanes, then had he full fifteen thousand, and they fast inclosed Tintateol. Upon the sea-strand Tintateol standeth, it is with

the sea cliffs fast inclosed, so that it may not be won, by no kind of man, but if hunger come therein under. The earl marched thence with seven thousand men, and proceeded to another castle, and inclosed it full fast, and left his wife in Tintateol, with ten thousand men. For it needed the knights, day or night, only to guard the castle gate, and he careless asleep; and the earl kept the other, and with him his own brother.

Uther heard this, who was king most stark, that Gorlois, his earl, had gathered his forces, and would hold war, with much wrath. The king summoned his host over all this territory, over all the land that stood in his hand, people of many kind marched them together, and came to London to the sovereign. Out of London's town fared Uther Pendragon, he and his knights proceeded forth-right, so long, that they came into Cornwall, and over the water they passed, that Tambres hight, right to the castle, where they knew Gorlois to be. With much enmity the castle they besieged, oft they assaulted it with fierce strength; together they leapt, people there fell. Full seven nights the king with his knights besieged the castle, his men there had sorrow, he might not of the earl anything win, and all the se'nnight lasted the marvellous fight. When Uther the king saw that nothing sped to him, oft he bethought him what he might do, for Ygaerne was so dear to him, even as his own life, and Gorlois was to him in the land of all men most loathsome; and in each way was woe to him in this world's realm, because he might not have anything of his will.

Then was with the king an old man exceeding well-informed; he was a very rich thane, and skilful in each doom, he was named Ulfin, much wisdom was with him. The king drew up his chin, and looked on Ulfin, greatly he mourned, his mood was disturbed. Then quoth Uther Pendragon to Ulfin the knight: "Ulfin, say me some counsel, or I shall be full soon dead, so much it longeth me after the fair Ygaerne, that I may not live. This word hold to me secret; for Ulfin the dear, thy good counsels, loud and still I will do them." Then answered Ulfin to the king who spake with him: "Now hear I a king say great marvel! Thou lovest Ygaerne, and holdest it so secret, the woman is to thee dear, and her lord all loath, his land thou consumest, and makest him destitute, and threatenest himself to slay, and his kin to destroy. Weenest thou with such harm to obtain Ygaerne? She should do then as no woman doth, with dread unmeet hold love sweet. But if thou lovest Ygaerne, thou shouldest hold it secret, and send her soon of silver and of gold, and love her with art, and with loving behest. The yet it were a doubt, whether thou mightest possess her, for Ygaerne is chaste, a woman most true; so was her mother, and more of the kin. In sooth I thee say, dearest of all kings, that otherwise thou must begin, if thou wilt win her. For yesterday came to me a good hermit, and swore by his chin, that he knew Merlin, where he each night resteth under heaven, and oft he spake with him, and stories him told. And if we might with art get Merlin, then mightest thou thy will wholly obtain."

Then was Uther Pendragon the softer in his mood, and gave answer: "Ulfin, thou hast well said counsel, I give thee in hand thirty ploughs of land, so that thou get Merlin, and do my will." Ulfin went through the folk, and sought all the host, and he after a time found the hermit, and in haste brought him to the king. And the king set to him in hand seven ploughs of land, if he might find and bring Merlin to the king. The hermit gan wend in the west end, to a wilderness, to a mickle wood, where he had dwelt well many winters, and Merlin very oft sought him there. So soon as the hermit came in, then found he Merlin, standing under a tree, and sore gan for him long, he saw the hermit come, as whilom was his custom, he ran towards him, both they rejoiced for this; they embraced, they kissed, and familiarly spake. Then said Merlin—much wisdom was with him—"Say thou, my dear friend, why wouldest thou not say to me, through no kind of thing, that thou wouldest go to the king? But full quickly I it knew anon as I thee missed, that thou wert come to Uther the king, and what the king spake with thee, and of his land thee offered, that thou shouldest bring me to Uther the king. And Ulfin thee sought, and to the king brought, and Uther Pendragon forth-right anon, set him in hand thirty ploughs of land, and he set thee in hand seven ploughs of land. Uther is desirous after Ygaerne the fair, wondrously much, after Gorlois's wife. But so long as is eternity, that

shall never come, that he obtain her, but through my stratagem, for there is no woman truer in this world's realm. And nevertheless he shall possess the fair Ygaerne; and he shall beget on her what shall widely rule, he shall beget on her a man exceeding marvellous. So long as is eternity, he shall never die, the while that this world standeth, his glory shall last, and he shall in Rome rule the thanes. All shall bow to him that dwelleth in Britain, of him shall gleemen goodly sing; of his breast noble poets shall eat; of his blood shall men be drunk; from his eyes shall fly fiery embers; each finger on his hand shall be a sharp steel brand, stone walls shall before him tumble; barons shall give way, and their standards fall! Thus he shall well long fare over all the lands, people to conquer, and set his laws. These are the tokens of the son, that shall come of Uther Pendragon and of Ygaerne. This speech is full secret, for yet neither it knoweth, Ygaerne nor Uther, that of Uther Pendragon such a son shall arise; for yet he is unbegot, that shall govern all the people. But, Lord," quoth Merlin, "now it is thy will, that forth I shall go to the host of the king; thy words I will obey, and now I will depart, and proceed I will for thy love to Uther Pendragon. And thou shalt have the land that he set thee in hand."

Thus they then spake: the hermit gan to weep; dearly he him kissed; there they gan to separate. Merlin went right forth south, the land was well known to him; forth-right he proceeded to the king's host. So soon as Uther him saw, so he approached towards him; and thus quoth Uther Pendragon: "Merlin, thou art welcome! Here I set thee in hand all the counsel of my land, and that thou must me advise, at my great need." Uther told him all that he would, and how Ygaerne was to him in the land dearest of women, and Gorlois, her lord, most odious of all men.—"And unless I have thy counsel, full soon thou wilt see me dead." Then answered Merlin: "Let Ulfin now come in, and give him in hand thirty ploughs of land, and give to the hermit what thou him promisedest, for I will not possess any land, neither silver nor gold, for I am in counsel most skilful of all men, and if I wished for possessions, then should I become worse in craft. But all thy will well shall come to pass, for I know such leech-craft, that shall be to thee lief, so that all thy appearance shall become as the earl's; thy speech, thy deeds among thy people; thy horse and thy weeds (garments), and so shalt thou ride. When Ygaerne shall see thee, in mood shall it be well to her; she lieth in Tintaeol, fast inclosed. There is no knight so well born, of no land chosen, that might with strength unfasten the gates of Tintaeol, unless they were burst with hunger and with thirst. But that is the sooth that I will say to thee, through all things thou shalt be as if thou wert the earl, and I will be every bit as Britael he is, who is a knight most hardy, he is this earl's steward, Jurdan is his chamber-knight, he is exceeding well dight, I will make Ulfin anon such as Jurdan is. Then wilt thou be lord, and I be Britael, thy steward, and Ulfin be Jurdan, thy chamber-knight. And we shall go now to-night, and fare thou shalt by counsel, whither soever I lead thee. Now to-night shall half a hundred knights with spear and with shield be about thy tents, so that never any man alive come there near, and if ever any man come there, that his head be taken from him. For the knights shall say—thy good men—that thou art let blood, and retest thee in bed."

These things were forth-right thus dight. Forth went the king, it was nothing known, and forth went with him Ulfin and Merlin, they proceeded right the way that lay into Tintaeol, they came to the castle-gate, and called familiarly: "Undo this gate-bolt; the earl is come here, Gorlois the lord, and Britael his steward, and Jordan the chamber-knight; we have journeyed all night!" The gateway made it known over all, and knights ran upon the wall, and spake with Gorlois, and knew him full surely. The knights were most alert, and weighed up the castle gate, and let him come within—the less was then their care,—they weened certainly to have much bliss. Then had they with stratagem Merlin there within, and Uther the king within their possession, and led there with him his good thane Ulfin. These tidings came quickly unto the lady, that her lord was come, and with him his three men. Out came Ygaerne forth to the earl, and said these words with winsome speech: "Welcome, lord, man to me dearest; and welcome, Jordan, and Britael is also;—be ye in safety parted from the king?" Then quoth Uther full truly as if it were Gorlois: "Mickle is the multi-

tude that is with Uther Pendragon, and I am all by night stolen from the fight, for after thee I was desirous, woman thou art to me dearest. Go into the chamber, and cause my bed to be made, and I will rest me for this night's space, and all day to-morrow, to gladden my people." Ygaerne went to chamber, and caused a bed to be made for him, the kingly bed was all overspread with a pall. The king viewed it well, and went to his bed; and Ygaerne lay down by Uther Pendragon, Now weened Ygaerne full truly, that it were Gorlois; through never any kind of thing knew she Uther the king. The king approached her as man should do to woman, and had him to do with the dearest of women; and he begat on her a marvellous man, keenest of all kings, that ever came among men, and he was on earth named Arthur. Ygaerne knew not who lay in her arms, for ever she weened full surely, that it were the Earl Gorlois.

There was no greater interval but until it was daylight, there forth-right the knights understood, that the king was departed out of the host. Then said the knights, sooth though it were not, that the king was flown, filled with dread, but it all was leasing that they said of the king, they held hereof much converse upon Uther Pendragon. Then said the earls and the highest barons; "Now when Gorlois shall know it, how it is passed, that our king is departed, and has left his host, he will forth-right weapon his knights, and out he will to fight, and fell us to ground, with his furious thanes make mickle slaughter; then were it better for us, that we were not born. But cause we the trumpets to be blown, and our army to assemble; and Cador the brave shall bear the king's standard; heave high the Dragon before this people, and march to the castle, with our keen folk. And the Earl Aldolf shall be our chief, and we shall obey him, as if he were the king; and so we shall with right with Gorlois fight, and if he will speak with us, and yearn this king's peace, set amity with soothfast oath, then may we with worship go hence; then our underlings will have no upbraidings, that we for any timidity hence fled." All the nation-folk praised this same counsel. Trumpets they blew, and assembled their host; up they heaved the Dragon, by each standard unmatched; there was many a bold man, that hung shield on shoulder, many a keen thane, and proceeded to the castle, where Gorlois was within, with his keen men. He caused trumpets to be blown, and his host to assemble; they leapt on steed, knights gan to ride. These knights were exceeding active, and went out at the gate; together they came soon, and quickly they attacked, fell the fated men, the ground they sought; there was much blood shed, harm was among the folk; amidst the fight full certainly men slew the Earl Gorlois. Then gan his men to flee, and the others to pursue after, they came to the castle, and within they thrust. Soon it came within, both the two hosts; there lasted the fight throughout the daylight; ere the day were all gone, the castle was won; was there no swain so mean, that he was not a well good thane.

The tidings came into Tintaeol in haste, forth into the castle wherein Uther was, that the good earl their lord Gorlois was slain full truly, and all his soldiers, and his castle taken. The king heard this, where he lay in amorous play, and leapt out of bower, as if it were a lion. Then quoth the King Uther, of this tidings he was ware: "Be still, be still, knights in hall! Here I am full truly, your lord Gorlois; and Jordan, my chamberlain, and Britael, my steward. I and these two knights leapt out of the fight, and in hither we are arrived—we were not there slain. But now I will march, and assemble my host; and I and my knights shall all by night proceed into a town, and meet Uther Pendragon, and unless he speak of reconciliation, I will worthily avenge me! And inclose ye this castle most fast, and bid Ygaerne that she mourn not. Now go I forth-right, have ye all good night!" Merlin went before, and the thane Ulfin, and afterwards Uther Pendragon, out of Tintaeol's town; ever they proceeded all night, until it was daylight.

When he came to the spot where his army lay, Merlin had on the king set his own features through all things, then his knights knew their sovereign; there was many a bold Briton filled with bliss; then was in Britain bliss enow; horns there blew, gleemen gan chant, glad was every knight, all arrayed with pall! Three days was the king dwelling there; and on the fourth day he went to Tintaeol. He sent to the castle his best thanes, and greeted Ygaerne, noblest of women, and sent her token what they spake

in bed; and ordered her that she should yield the castle quickly—there was no other counsel, for her lord was dead. Yet Ygaerne weened that it were sooth, that the dead earl had sought his people, and she all believed, that it were false, that the King Uther had ever come down. Knights went to counsel, knights went to communing, they resolved that they would not hold the castle any longer, their bridge they let down and delivered it to Uther Pendragon. Then stood all this kingdom eft in Uther's own hand.

There Uther the king took Ygaerne for queen; Ygaerne was with child by Uther the king, all through Merlin's craft, before she was wedded. The time came that was chosen, then was Arthur born. So soon as he came on earth, elves took him; they enchanted the child with magic most strong, they gave him might to be the best of all knights; they gave him another thing, that he should be a rich king, they gave him the third, that he should live long; they gave to him the prince virtues most good, so that he was most generous of all men alive. This the elves gave him, and thus the child thrived. After Arthur, the blessed lady was born, she was named Anna, the blessed maiden; and afterwards she took (married) Loth, who possessed Leoneis (Lothian), she was in Leoneis lady of the people. Long lived Uther with mickle bliss here, with good peace, with much quiet, free in his kingdom.

When that he was an old man, then came illness on him; the illness laid him down, sick was Uther Pendragon, so he was here sick seven years. Then became the Britons much emboldened, they did oft wickedly, all for absence of dread. The yet lay Octa, Hengest's son, bound in the prison of London, who was taken at York, and his comrade Ebissa, and his other Ossa. Twelve knights guarded them day and night, who were wearily oppressed with watching, in London. Octa heard say of the sickness of the king, and spake with the guardsmen, who should keep him: "Hearken to me now, knights, what I will make known to you. We lie here in London fast bound, and ye many a long day have watched over us. Better were it for us to live in Saxland, with much wealth, than thus miserably here lie asleep. And if ye would in all things accomplish this, and do my will, I would give you land, much silver and gold, so that ever ye might richly rule in the land, and live your life as to you shall be liefest of all. For ye shall never have good gifts of Uther, your king, for now full soon he will be dead, and his people all desert, then will ye have neither, the one nor the other. But bethink you, brave men, and give to us your compassion, and think what were lief to you, if ye thus lay bound, and might in your land live in joy." Very oft Octa spake so with these knights. The knights gan to commune, the knights gan to counsel, and to Octa they said full still: "We shall do thy will." Oaths they swore, that they would not deceive. It was on a night that the wind went right; forth went the knights at the midnight, and led forth Octa, and Ebissa, and Ossa, along the Thames they proceeded forth into the sea; forth they passed into Saxland. Their kindred came towards them with great flocks (forces); they marched over all the land, as to them was liefest, men gave them gifts and land; men gave them silver and gold Octa bethought him what he might do; he thought to come hither, and avenge his father's wounds. They procured a host of innumerable folk, to the sea they proceeded with great threats, they came to Scotland; soon they pushed on land, and greeted it with fire; the Saxons were cruel, the Scots they slew; with fire they down laid thirty hundred towns; the Scots they slew, many and innumerable.

The tidings came to Uther the king. Uther was exceeding woe, and wonderfully grieved, and sent in to Leoneis, to his dear friends, and greeted Loth, his son-in-law, and bade him be in health, and ordered him to take in his own hand all his royal land; knights and freemen, and freely hold them, and lead them in a host, as the laws are in the land. And he ordered his dear knights to be obedient to Loth, with loving looks, as if he were sovereign. For Loth was very good knight, and had held many fight, and he was liberal to every man, he delivered to him the government of all this land. Octa held much war, and Loth often fought with him, and oft he gained possessions, and oft he them lost. The Britons had mickle mood, and immoderate pride, and were void of dread, on account of the king's age; and looked very contemptuously on Loth the earl, and did very evilly all his commands, and were all two counsels—their care was the more! This was soon said to the

sick king, that his high men Loth all despised.

Now will I tell thee, in this history, how Uther the king disposed himself. He said that he would go to his host, and see with his eyes who would there do well. He caused there to be made a good horse-litter, and caused an army to be assembled over all his kingdom; that each man by (on pain of) his life should come to him quickly, by their lives and by their limbs, to avenge the king's shame.—"And if there is any man, who will not come hastily, I will speedily destroy him, either slay either hang." All full soon to the court (or to the army) they came, durst there none remain, nor the fat nor the lean. The king forth-right took all his knights, and marched him anon to the town of Verulam; about Verulam's town came him Uther Pendragon; Octa was within with all his men. Then was Verulam a most royal town, Saint Alban was there slain, and deprived of life-day; the burgh was subsequently destroyed, and much folk there was slain. Uther lay without, and Octa within. Uther's army advanced to the wall, the powerful thanes fiercely assaulted it, they might not of the wall one stone detach, nor with any strength the wall injure.

Well blithe was then Hengest's son Octa, when he saw the Britons recede from the walls, and go sorrowful again to their tents. Then said Octa to his comrade Ebissa: "Here is come to Verulam Uther, the lame man, and will with us here fight in his litter; he weened with his crutch to thrust us down! But to-morrow when it is day, the people shall arise, and open our castle-gate, and this realm we shall all win; shall we never lie here for one lame man! Out we shall ride upon our good steeds, and advance to Uther, and fell his folk; for all they are fated (shall die) that hither are ridden; and take the lame man, and lay in our bonds, and hold the wretch until that he dies; and so men shall leach his limbs that are sore, and heal his bones with bitter steel!" Thus spake him Octa with his comrade Ebissa; but all it happened otherwise than they weened. On the morrow when it dawned, they unfastened the doors; up arose Octa, Ebissa, and Ossa, and ordered their knights to prepare them for fight, to undo their broad gates, and unfasten the burgh. Octa rode him out, and much folk followed after him; with his bold warriors there he bale found! Uther saw him this, that Octa approached to them, and thought to fell his host to the ground.

Then called Uther with quick voice there: "Where be ye, Britons, my bold thanes? Now is come that day, that the Lord may help us;—that Octa shall find, in that he threatened me to bind. Think of your ancestors, how good they were in fight; think of the worship that I have to you well given; nor let ye ever this heathen enjoy your homes, or these same raging hounds possess your lands. And I will pray to the Lord who formed the daylight, and to all the hallows, that sit high in heaven, that I on this field may be succoured. Now march quickly to them,—may the Lord aid you, may the all-ruling God protect my thanes!" Knights gan to ride, spears gan to glide, and broad spears brake, shivered shields—helms there were severed, men fell! The Britons were bold, and busy in fight, and the heathen hounds fell to the ground. There was slain Octa, Ebissa, and Ossa; there seventeen thousand sunk into hell; and many there escaped toward the north end. And all the daylight Uther's knights slew and captured all that they came nigh; when it was even, then was it all won. Then sung the soldiers with great strength, and said these words in their merry songs: "Here is Uther Pendragon come to Verulam's town; and he hath so beaten Octa, and Ebissa, and Ossa, and given them in the land laws most strong, so that men may tell their kin in story, and thereof make songs in Saxland!" Then was Uther blithe, and exceeding glad, and spake with his people, that was dear to him in heart, and these words said Uther the old: "Saxish men have accounted me for base; my sickness they twitted me with their scornful words, because I was led here in a horse-litter; and said that I was dead, and my folk asleep. And now is much wonder come to this realm, that now this dead king hath killed these quick; and some he hath them driven forth with the weather! Now hereafter be done the Lord's will!"

The Saxish men fled exceeding fast, that had aside retreated from the fight; forth they gan proceed into Scotland, and took to them for king Colgrim the fair. He was Hengest's relation, and dearest of men to him; and Octa loved him, the while that he lived.

The Saxish men were greatly discouraged, and proceeded them together into Scotland; and they made Colgrim the fair for king, and assembled a host, wide over the land, and said that they would with their wicked craft in Winchester town kill Uther Pendragon. Alas, that it should so happen! Now said the Saxish men in their communing together: "Take we six knights, wise men and active, and skilful spies, and send we to the court, in almsman's guise, and dwell in the court, with the high king, and every day pass through all the people; and go to the king's dole, as if they were infirm, and among the poor people hearken studiously if man might with craft, by day or by night, in Winchester's town come to Uther Pendragon, and kill the king with murder;"—then were (would be) their will wholly accomplished, then were they careless of Constanine's kin. Now went forth the knights all by daylight, in almsman's clothes—knights most wicked—to the king's court—there they harm wrought. They went to the dole, as if they were infirm, and hearkened studiously of the king's sickness, how men might put the king to death. Then met they with a knight, from the king he came forth-right; he was Uther's relation, and dearest of men to him. These deceivers, where they sate along the street, called to the knight with familiar words: "Lord, we are wretched men in this world's realm; whilom we were in land accounted for good men, until Saxish men set us adown, and bereaved us of all, and our possessions took from us. Now we sing beads (prayers) for Uther the king; each day in a meal our meat faileth; cometh never in our dish neither flesh nor any fish, nor any kind of drink but a draught of water, but water clean—therefore we are thus lean."

The knight heard this; back he went forth-right, and came to the king, where he lay in chamber, and said to the king: "Lord, be thou in health! Here out sit six men, alike in hue, all they are companions, and clothed with hard hair-cloth. Whilom they were in this world's realm goodly thanes, and filled with goods; now have Saxish men set them to ground, so that they are in the world accounted for wretches, they have not at board but bread alone, nor for their drink but water draughts. Thus they lead their life in thy people, and bid their beads, that God will let thee long live." Then quoth Uther the king: "Let them come in hither, I will them clothe, and I will them feed, for the love of my Lord, the while that I live." The treacherous men came into the chamber, the king caused them to be fed, the king caused them to be clothed, and at night each laid them on his bed. And each on his part aspired earnestly how they might kill the king with murder, but they might not through anything kill Uther the king, nor through any craft might come to him.

Then happened it on a time, the rain it gan to pour; then called there a leech, where he lay in the chamber, to a chamber-knight, and ordered him forth-right to run to the well, that was near the hall, and set there a good swam, to keep it from the rain.—"For the king may not enjoy no draught in the world but the cold well stream, that is to him pleasant; that is for his sickness best of all draughts." This speech forth-right heard these six knights—to harm they were prompt—and went out by night forth to the well—there they harm wrought. Out they drew soon fair phials, filled with poison, of all liquids bitterest; six phials full they poured in the well; then was the well anon with poison infected. Then were full blithe the traitors in their life, and forth they went; they durst not there remain. Then came there forth-right two chamber-knights; they bare in their hands two bowls of gold. They came to the well, and filled their bowls; back they gan wend to Uther the king, forth into the chamber, where he lay in bed.—"Hail be thou, Uther! Now we are come here, and we have brought thee, what thou ere bade, cold well water; receive it with joy." Up arose the sick king, and sate on his bed; of the water he drank, and soon he gan to sweat; his heart gan to weaken, his face began to blacken, his belly gan to swell, the king gan to burst. There was no other hap, but there was Uther the king dead; and all they were dead, who drank of the water.

When the attendants saw the calamity of the king, and of the king's men, who with poison were destroyed, then went to the well knights that were active, and destroyed the well with painful labour, with earth and with stones made a steep hill. Then the people took the dead king—numerous folk—and forth him carried the stiff-minded men into Stonehenge, and there buried him, by

his dear brother; side by side there they lie both.

Then came it all together, that was highest in the land, earls and barons, and book-learned men; they came to London, to a mickle husting, and the rich thanes betook them all to counsel, that they would send messengers over sea into Britanny, after the best of all youth that was in the worlds-realm in those days, named Arthur the strong, the best of all knights; and say that he should come soon to his kingdom; for dead was he Uther Pendragon, as Aurelie was ere, and Uther Pendragon had no other son, that might after his days hold by law the Britons, maintain with worship, and rule this kingdom. For yet were in this land the Saxons settled; Colgrim the keen, and many thousands of his companions, that oft made to our Britons evil injuries. The Britons full soon took three bishops, and seven riders, strong in wisdom; forth they gan proceed into Britanny, and they full soon came to Arthur.—"Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of knights! Uther thee greeted, when he should depart, and bade that thou shouldst thyself in Britain hold right laws, and help thy folk, and defend this kingdom, as good king should do, defeat thy enemies, and drive them from land. And he prayed the mild Son of God to be to thee now in aid, that thou mightest do well, and the land receive from God. For dead is Uther Pendragon, and thou art Arthur, his son; and dead is the other, Aurelie his brother." Thus they gan tell, and Arthur sate full still; one while he was wan, and in hue exceeding pale; one while he was red, and was moved in heart. When it all brake forth, it was good that he spake; and thus said he there right, Arthur the noble knight: "Lord Christ, God's Son, be to us now in aid, that I may in life hold God's laws!"

Arthur was fifteen years old, when this tiding was told to him, and all they were well employed, for he was much instructed. Arthur forth-right called his knights, and bade every man get ready his weapons, and saddle their horses very speedily, for he would go to this Britain. To the sea proceeded the good thanes, at Michael's mount, with a mickle host, the sea set them on the strand, at Southampton they came ashore. Forth he gan ride, Arthur the powerful, right to Silchester; there it seemed good to him; there was the host of Britons boldly assembled. Great was the bliss when Arthur came to the burgh; then was blast of trumpets, and men most glad; there they raised to be king Arthur the young.

When Arthur was king—hearken now a marvellous thing;—he was liberal to each man alive, knight with the best, wondrously keen! He was to the young for father, to the old for comforter, and with the unwise wonderfully stern, wrong was to him exceeding loathsome, and the right ever dear. Each of his cupbearers, and of his chamber-thanes, and his chamber-knights, bare gold in hand, to back and to bed, clad with gold web. He had never any cook, that he was not champion most good; never any knight's swam, that he was not bold thane! The king held all his folk together with great bliss, and with such things he overcame all kings, with fierce strength and with treasure. Such were his qualities, that all folk it knew. Now was Arthur good king, his people loved him, eke it was known wide, of his kingdom.

The king held in London a mickle husting; thereto were arrived all his knights, rich men and poor, to honour the king. When that it was all come, a numerous folk, up arose Arthur noblest of kings, and caused to be brought before him reliques well choice, and thereto the king gan soon to kneel thrice,—his people knew not what he would pronounce. Arthur held up his right hand, an oath he there swore, that never by his life, for no man's lore, should the Saxons become blithe in Britain, nor be landholders, nor enjoy worship, but he would drive them out, for they were at enmity with him. For they slew Uther Pendragon, who was son of Constance, so they did the other, Aurelie, his brother, therefore they were in land loathest of all folk. Arthur forth-right took his wise knights, were it lief to them were it loath to them, they all swore the same oath, that they would truly hold with Arthur, and avenge the King Uther, whom the Saxons killed here. Arthur sent his writs wide over his land, after all the knights that he might obtain, that they full soon should come to the king, and he would in land lovingly maintain them; reward them with land, with silver and with gold. Forth went the king with a numerous host, he led a surprising multitude, and marched right to York. There he lay

one night, on the morrow he proceeded forth-right where he knew Colgrim to be, and his comrades with him.

Since Octa was slam, and deprived of life-day, who was Hengest's son, out of Saxland come, Colgrim was the noblest man that came out of Saxland, after Hengest, and Hors, his brother, and Octa, and Ossa, and their companion Ebissa. At that day Colgrim ruled the Saxons by authority, led and counselled, with fierce strength; mickle was the multitude that marched with Colgrim! Colgrim heard tiding of Arthur the king, that he came toward him, and would do to him evil. Colgrim bethought him what he might do, and assembled his host over all the North land. There came together all the Scottish people, Peohtes and Saxons joined them together, and men of many kind followed Colgrim. Forth he gan to march with an immense force, against Arthur, noblest of kings, he thought to kill the king in his land, and fell his folk to the ground, and set all this kingdom in his own hand, and fell to the ground Arthur the young. Forth marched Colgrim, and his army with him, and proceeded with his host until he came to a water, the water is named Douglas, people it destroyed!

There came Arthur against him, ready with his fight; on a broad ford the hosts them met, vigorously their brave champions attacked, the fated fell to the ground! There was much blood shed, and woe there was rife, shivered shafts, men there fell! Arthur saw that, in mood he was uneasy, Arthur bethought him what he might do, and drew him backward on a broad field. When his foes weened that he would fly, then was Colgrim glad, and all his host with him, they weened that Arthur had with fear retreated there, and passed over the water, as if they were mad. When Arthur saw that, that Colgrim was so nigh to him, and they were both beside the water, thus said Arthur, noblest of kings: "See ye not, my Britons, here beside us, our full foes—Christ destroy them!—Colgrim the strong, out of Saxland? His kin in this land killed our ancestors, but now is the day come, that the Lord hath appointed, that he shall lose the life, and lose his friends, or else we shall be dead, we may not see him alive! The Saxish men shall abide sorrow, and we avenge worthily our friends." Up caught Arthur his shield, before his breast, and he gan to rush as the howling wolf, when he cometh from the wood, behung with snow, and thinketh to bite such beasts as he liketh. Arthur then called to his dear knights: "Advance we quickly, brave thanes! all together towards them; we all shall do well, and they forth fly, as the high wood, when the furious wind heaveth it with strength!" Flew over the wealds thirty thousand shields, and smote on Colgrim's knights, so that the earth shook again. Brake the broad spears, shivered shields; the Saxish men fell to the ground! Colgrim saw that, therefore he was woe—the fairest man of all that came out of Saxland. Colgrim gan to flee, exceeding quickly; and his horse bare him with great strength over the deep water, and saved him from death. The Saxons gan to sink—sorrow was given to them! Arthur hastened speedily to the water, and turned his spear's point, and hindered to them the ford; there the Saxons were drowned, full seven thousand. Some they gan wander, as the wild crane doth in the moorfen, when his flight is impaired, and swift hawks pursue after him, and hounds with mischief meet him in the reeds; then is neither good to him, nor the land nor the flood, the hawks him smite, the hounds him bite, then is the royal fowl at his death-time! Colgrim fled him over the fields quickly, until he came to York, riding most marvellously; he went into the burgh, and fast it inclosed; he had within ten thousand men, burghers with the best; that were beside him. Arthur pursued after him with thirty thousand knights, and marched right to York with folk very numerous, and besieged Colgrim at York, who defended it against him.

Seven nights therefore Baldolf the fair, Colgrim's brother, was gone southward, and lay by the sea-side, and abode Childric. Childric was in those days a kaiser of powerful authority; the land in Alemaine was his own. When Baldolf heard, where he lay by the sea, that Arthur had inclosed Colgrim in York, Baldolf had assembled seven thousand men, bold fellows, who by the sea lay; they took them to counsel, that back they would ride, and leave Childric, and proceed into York, and fight with Arthur, and destroy all his people. Baldolf swore in his anger, that he would be Arthur's bane, and possess all this realm, with Colgrim his

brother. Baldolf would not wait for the kaiser Childric, but thence he marched forth, and drew him forth right north, from day to day, with his bold folk, until he came into a wood, into a wilderness, full seven miles from Arthur's host. He had thought by night with seven thousand knights to ride upon Arthur, and fell his folk, and himself kill.

But all it otherwise happened, other than he weened; for Baldolf had in his host a British knight; he was Arthur's relative, named Maurin. Maurin went aside to the wood, through woods and through fields, until he came to Arthur's tents; and thus said soon to Arthur the king: "Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of kings! I am hither come; I am of thy kindred. Here is Baldolf arrived with warriors most hardy, and thinketh in this night to slay thee and thy knights, to avenge his brother, who is greatly discouraged, but God shall prevent him, through his mickle might, And send now forth Cador, the Earl of Cornwall, and with him bold knights, good and brave, full seven hundred good thanes; and I will counsel them, and I will lead them, how they may Baldolf slay as if a wolf!" Forth went Cador and all these knights, so that they came aside where Baldolf lay in tents, they advanced to him on each side; they slew, they captured all that they came nigh;—there were killed nine hundred all out told.

Baldolf was gone aside to save himself, and fled through the wilderness, wondrously fast; and had his dear men with sorrow deserted, and fled him so far north, that he came so forth, where Arthur lay on the weald, with his powerful host, all about York—king most surprising! Colgrim was within with the Saxish men, and Baldolf bethought him what he might do; with what kind of stratagem he might come within, into the burgh, to Colgrim his brother, who was to him the dearest of all men alive. Baldolf caused to be shaved to the bare skin his beard and his chin, and made him as a fool; he caused half his head to be shorn, and took him in hand a long harp. He could harp exceeding well in his childhood; and with his harp he went to the king's host, and gan there to play, and much game to make. Oft men him smote with wands most smart; oft men him struck as men do fool; each man that met him, greeted him with derision; so never any man knew of Baldolf's appearance, but that it were a fool come to the folk! So long he went upward, so long he went downward, that they were aware, who were there within, that it was Baldolf without, Colgrim's brother. They cast out a rope, and Baldolf grasped it fast, and they drew up Baldolf, so that he came within, with such kind of stratagem Baldolf came within. Then was Colgrim blithe, and all his knights with him, and greatly they gan to threaten Arthur the king. Arthur was beside, and saw this game, and wrathed himself wondrously much; and ordered anon all his brave folk to weapon them; he thought to win the burgh with strength.

As Arthur was about to assault the wall, then came there riding Patrick, the rich man, who was a Scottishthane, fair in his land; and thus began to call to the king anon: "Hail be thou, Arthur the king, noblest of Britons! I will tell thee new tiding, of the kaiser Childric, the furious and the powerful, the strong and the bold. He is in Scotland arrived in a haven, and the homes consumeth, and wieldeth all our land in his own hand. He hath a host brave, all the strength of Rome; he saith with his boast, when men pour to him the wine, that thou darest not in any spot his attacks abide, neither in field, nor in wood, nor in ever any place. And if thou him abidest, he will thee bind; destroy thy people, and possess thy land."

Oft was Arthur woe, but never worse than then; and he drew him backward, beside the burgh; called to counsel knights at need, barons and earls, and the holy bishops; and bade that they should him counsel, how he might in the realm with his army his honour maintain, and fight with Childric, the strong and the powerful, who hither would come, to help Colgrim. Then answered the Britons, that were there beside: "Go we right to London, and let him come after; and if he cometh riding, sorrow he shall abide; he himself and his host shall die!" Arthur approved all that his people counselled; forth he gan march until he came to London.

Colgrim was in York, and there he abode Childric. Childric gan proceed over the North end, and took in his hand a great deal of land. All Scotland he gave to athane of his, and all Northumberland he set in the hand of his brother; Galloway and Orkney he

gave to an earl of his; himself he took the land from Humber into London. He thought never more of Arthur to have mercy, unless he would become his man, Arthur, Uther's son.

Arthur was in London, with all the Britons; he summoned his forces over all this land, that every man, that good would grant to him, quickly and full soon to London should come. Then was England filled with harm; here was weeping and here was lament, and sorrow immoderate; mickle hunger and strife at every man's gate! Arthur sent over sea two good knights, to Howel his relation, who was to him dearest of men, who possessed Brittany, knight with the best; and bade him full soon, that he hither should come, sail to land, to help the people; for Childric had in hand much of this land, and Colgrim and Baldulf were come to him, and thought to drive Arthur the king out of the land; take from him his right, and his kingdom; then were his kindred disgraced with shameful injury; their worship lost in this worlds-realm: then were it better for the king, that he were not born! Howel heard this, the highest of Brittany; and he gan to call his good knights anon, and bade them to horse exceeding speedily, and go into France, to the free knights, and should say to them that they should come, quickly and full soon, to Michael's Mount, with mickle strength, all who would of silver and of gold, win worship in this worlds-realm. To Poitou he sent his good thanes; and some toward Flanders, exceeding quickly; and to Touraine, two there proceeded, and into Gascony, knights eke good, and ordered them to come with strength toward Michael's Mount; and ere they went to flood (embarked), they should have gifts good, that they might the blither depart from their land, and with Howel the fair come to this land, to help Arthur, noblest of kings. Thirteen days were passed since the messengers came there, then advanced they toward the sea, as the hail doth from the welkin; and two hundred ships were there well prepared, men filled them with folk, and forth they voyaged; the wind and the weather stood after their will; and they came to land at Hamtone. Up leapt from the ships the furious men; bare to the land helms and burnies; with spears and with shields they covered all the fields. There was many a bold Briton that threat had raised, they threatened greatly, by their quick life, that they would greet Childric the powerful, the bold kaiser, with much harm there. And if he would not flee away, and toward Alemaine proceed, and if he would in the land with fight resist; with his bold people the barks abide; here they should leave what to them were dearest of all, their heads and hands, and their white helms; "and so they shall in this land lose their friends, and fall into hell the heathen hounds!"

Arthur was in London, noblest of kings, and heard say sooth relation, that Howel the strong was come to land, forth-right to Hamtone, with thirty thousand knights, and with innumerable folk, that followed the king; Arthur towards him marched, with great bliss; with a mickle host, towards his relation. Together they came—bliss was among the folk—and they kissed and embraced, and spake familiarly; and anon forthright assembled their knights. Then were there together two good armies, of whom Howel should command thirty thousand knights, and Arthur had in land forty thousand in hand. Forth-right they marched toward the North end, toward Lincoln night and day, that Childric the kaiser besieged. But he the yet had nought won; for there were within seven thousand men, brave men and active, by day and night.

Arthur with his forces marched toward the burgh; and Arthur fore-ordered his knights, by day and night, that they should proceed as still, as if they would steal; pass over the country, and cease any noise; horns and trumpets, all should be relinquished. Arthur took a knight, that was a brave man and active; and sent him to Lincoln to his dear men, and he said to them in sooth, with mouth, that Arthur would come, noblest of kings, at the midnight, and with him many a good knight.—"And ye within, then be ye ware, that when ye hear the din, that ye the gates unfasten; and sally out of the burgh, and fell your foes; and smite on Childric, the strong and the powerful; and we shall tell them British tales!"

It was at the midnight, when the moon shone right south, Arthur with his host marched to the burgh; the folk was as still as if they would steal; forth they proceeded until they saw Lincoln. Thus gan he call, Arthur the keen man: "Where be ye, my knights,

my dear-worthy warriors? See ye the tents, where Childric lieth on the fields; Colgrim and Baldulf, with bold strength; the Alemainish folk, that us hath harmed, and the Saxish folk, that sorrow to us promiseth; that all hath killed the highest of my kin; Constance and Constantine, and Uther, who was my father, and Aurelie Ambrosie, who was my father's brother, and many thousand men of my noble kindred? Go we out to them, and lay to the ground, and worthily avenge our kin and their realm; and all together forth-right now ride every good knight!" Then Arthur gan to ride, and the army gan to move, as if all the earth would be consumed; and smote in the fields among Childric's tents. That was the first man, that there gan to shout—Arthur the noble man, who was Uther's son—keenly and loud, as becometh a king: "Now aid us, Mary, God's mild mother! And I pray her son, that he be to us in succour!" Even with the words they turned their spears; pierced and slew all that they came nigh. And the knights out of the burgh marched against them (the enemy); if they fled to the burgh, there they were destroyed; if they fled to the wood, there they slaughtered them; come wherever they might come, ever they them slew. It is not in any book indited, that ever any fight were in this Britain, that mischief was so rife; for folk it was most miserable, that ever came to the land! There was mickle blood-shed, mischief was among the folk; death there was rife; the earth there became dun!

Childric the kaiser had a castle here, in Lincoln's field, where he lay within, that was newly wrought, and exceeding well guarded; and there were with him Baldulf and Colgrim, and saw that their folk suffered death. And they anon forth-right, on with their burnies, and fled out of the castle, of courage bereft; and fled forth-right anon to the wood of Calidon. They had for companions seven hundred riders; and they left forty thousand slain, and deprived of life-day, felled to the ground; Alemainish men, with mischief destroyed, and the Saxish men, brought to the ground! Then saw Arthur, noblest of kings, that Childric was flown, and into Calidon gone, and Colgrim and Baldulf with him were gone into the high wood, into the high holm. And Arthur pursued after with sixty thousand knights of British people; the wood he all surrounded; and on one side they it felled, full seven miles, one tree upon another, truly fast; on the other side he surrounded it with his army, three days and three nights; that was to them mickle harm.

Then saw Colgrim, as he lay therein, that there was without meat sharp hunger, and strife; nor they nor their horses help had any. And thus called Colgrim to the kaiser: "Say me, Lord Childric, sooth words; for what kind of thing lie we thus herein? Why should we not go out, and assemble our host, and begin fight with Arthur and with his knights? For better it is for us on land with honour to lie, than that we thus here perish for hunger; it grieveth us sore, to the destruction of the folk. Either send we again and again, and yearn Arthur's peace, and pray thus his mercy, and hostages deliver him, and make friendship with the free king." Childric heard this, where he lay within the dyke, and he answered with sorrowful voice: "If Baldulf it will, who is thine own brother, and more of our comrades, who with us are here, that we pray Arthur's peace, and make amity with him, after your will I will do it. For Arthur is esteemed very noble man in land; dear to all his men, and of royal kindred, all come of kings; he was Uther's son. And oft it befalleth, in many kind of land, where the good knights come to stern fight, that they who first gain, afterwards they it lose. And thus to us now is befallen here, and eft to us better will happen, if we may live." Soon forth-right answered all the knights: "We all praise this counsel, for thou hast well said!"

They took twelve knights, and sent forth-right, where he was in tent, by the wood's end; and the one called anon with quick voice: "Lord Arthur, thy peace! We would speak with thee; hither the kaiser sent us, who is named Childric, and Colgrim and Baldulf, both together. Now and evermore they pray thy mercy; thy men they will become, and thy honour advance, and they will give to thee hostages enow, and hold thee for lord, as to thee shall be liefest of all, if they may depart hence with life into their land; and bring evil tidings. For here we have found sorrows of many kind; at Lincoln left our dear relatives; sixty thousand men, that there are slain. And if it were to thee will in heart, that we might pass

over sea with sail, we would nevermore eft come here; for here we have lost our dear relatives. So long as is ever, here come we back never!" Then laughed Arthur, with loud voice:—"Thanked be the Lord, that all dooms wieldeth, that Childric the strong is tired of my land! My land he hath divided to all his knights; myself he thought to drive out of my country; hold me for base, and have my realm, and my kin all put to death, my folk all destroy. But of him it is happened, as it is of the fox, when he is boldest over the weald, and hath his full play, and fowls enow; for wildness he climbeth, and rocks he seeketh; in the wilderness holes to him worketh. Fare whosoever shall fare, he hath never any care; he weeneth to be of power the boldest of all animals. But when come to him the men under the hills, with horns, with hounds, with loud cries; the hunters there hollow, the hounds there give tongue, they drive the fox over dales and over downs, he fleeth to the holm, and seeketh his hole; in the furthest end in the hole he goeth; then is the bold fox of bliss all deprived, and men dig to him on each side; then is there most wretched the proudest of all animals! So was it with Childric, the strong and the rich; he thought all my kingdom to set in his own hand, but now I have driven him to the bare death, whether so (whatsoever) I will do, either slay or hang. Now will I give him peace, and let him speak with me; I will not him slay, nor hang, but his prayer I will receive. Hostages I will have of the highest of his men; their horses and weapons, ere they hence depart; and so they shall as wretches go to their ships; sail over sea to their good land, and there worthily dwell in their realm, and tell tidings of Arthur the king, how I them have freed, for my father's soul, and for my freedom solaced the wretches." Hereby was Arthur the king of honour deprived, was there no man so bold that durst him advise;—that repented him sore, soon thereafter!

Childric came from covert to Arthur the king; and he there became his man, with all his knights. Four-and-twenty hostages Childric there delivered, all they were chosen, and noble men born; they delivered their horses, and their burnies, spears and shields, and their long swords; all they relinquished that they there had. Forth they gan to march until they came to the sea, where their good ships by the sea stood. The wind stood at will, the weather most favourable, and they shoved from the strand ships great and long; the land they all left, and floated with the waves, that no sight of land they might see. The water was still, after their will; they let together their sails glide, board against board, the men there discoursed and said that they would return eft to this land, and avenge worthily their relatives, and waste Arthur's land, and kill his folk, and win the castles, and work their pleasure.

So they voyaged on the sea even so long, that they came between England and Normandy; they veered their luffs, and came toward land, so that they came full surely to Dartmouth at Totnes; with much bliss they approached to the land. So soon as they came on land, the folk they slew; the churls they drove off, that tilled the earth there; the knights they hung, that defended the land, all the good wives they sticked with knives; all the maidens they killed with murder; and all the learned men (clerics) they laid on embers. All the domestics (or baser sort) they killed with clubs; they felled the castles, the land they ravaged; the churches they consumed—grief was among the folk!—the sucking children they drowned in the water. The cattle that they took, all they slaughtered; to their inns they carried it, and boiled it and roasted; all they it took, that they came nigh. All day they sung of Arthur the king, and said that they had won homes, that they should hold in their power; and there they would dwell winter and summer. And if Arthur were so keen, that he would come to fight with Childric, the strong and the rich, they would of his back make a bridge, and take all the bones of the noble king, and tie them together with golden ties, and lay them in the hall door, where each man should go forth, to the worship of Childric, the strong and the rich! This was all their game, for Arthur the king's shame; but all it happened in otherwise, soon thereafter; their boast and their game befell to themselves to shame; and so doth well everywhere the man that so acteth.

Childric the kaiser won all that he looked on with eyes; he took Somerset, and he took Dorset, and in Devonshire the folk all destroyed, and Wiltshire with hostility he greeted, he took all the lands unto the sea strand. Then at the last, then caused he horns

and trumpets to be blown, and his host to be assembled, and forth he would march, and Bath all besiege, and eke Bristol about berow. This was their threat, ere they to Bath came. To Bath came the kaiser, and belay the castle there; and the men within bravely began; they mounted upon the stone walls, well weaponed over all, and defended the place against Childric the strong. There lay the kaiser, and Colgrim his companion, and Baldulf his brother, and many another.

Arthur was by the North, and knew nought hereof; he proceeded over all Scotland, and set it in his own hand; Orkney and Galloway, Man and Moray, and all the lands that lay thereto. Arthur it weened to be certain thing, that Childric had departed to his own land, and that he never more would come here. When the tidings came to Arthur the king, that Childric the kaiser was come to land, and in the South end sorrow there wrought, then said Arthur, noblest of kings: "Alas! alas! that I spared my foe! that I had not with hunger destroyed him in the wood, or with sword cut him all to pieces! Now he yields to me meed for my good deeds. But so held me the Lord, who formed the daylight, he shall therefore abide bitterest of all bales—hard games;—his bane I will be! And Colgrim and Baldulf both I will kill, and all their people shall suffer death. If the Ruler of Heaven will grant it, I will worthily avenge all his hostile deeds; if the life in my breast may last to me, and the Power that formed moon and sun will grant it to me, never shall Childric eft deceive me!"

Now called Arthur, noblest of kings:—"Where be ye, my knights, brave men and active! To horse, to horse, good warriors; and we shall march toward Bath speedily! Let high gallows be up raised, and bring here the hostages before our knights, and they shall hang on high trees!" There he caused to be destroyed four-and-twenty children, Alemainish men of very noble race.

Then came tidings to Arthur the king, that Howel, his relation, was sick lying in Clud—therefore he was sorry—and there he left him. Forth he gan to push exceeding hastily, until he beside Bath approached to a plain; there he alighted, and all his knights; and on with their burnies the stern men, and he in five divisions separated his army.

When he had duly set all, and it all beseemed, then he put on his burny, fashioned of steel, that an elvish smith made, with his excellent craft; he was named Wygar, the witty wright. His shanks he covered with hose of steel. Caliburn, his sword, he hung by his side; it was wrought in Avalon, with magic craft. A helm he set on his head, high of steel; thereon was many gemstone, all encompassed with gold; it was Uther's, the noble king's; it was named Goswhit, each other unlike. He hung on his neck a precious shield; its name was in British called Pridwen; therein was engraved with red gold tracings a precious image of God's mother. His spear he took in hand, that was named Ron. When he had all his weeds, then leapt he on his steed. Then might he behold, who stood beside, the fairest knight, that ever host should lead; never saw any man better knight none, than Arthur he was, noblest of race! Then called Arthur with loud voice: "Lo! where here before us the heathen hounds, who slew our ancestors with their wicked crafts; and they are to us in land loathest of all things. Now march we to them, and starkly lay on them, and avenge worthily our kindred, and our realm, and avenge the mickle shame by which they have disgraced us, that they over the waves should have come to Dartmouth. And all they are forsworn, and all they shall be destroyed; they shall be all put to death, with the Lord's assistance! March we now forward, fast together, even all as softly as if we thought no evil; and when we come to them, myself I will commence; foremost of all the fight I will begin. Now we shall ride, and over the land glide; and no man on pain of his life make noise, but fare quickly; the Lord us aid!" Then Arthur the rich man gan to ride; he proceeded over the weald, and Bath would seek.

The tiding came to Childric, the strong and the rich, that Arthur came with host all ready to fight. Childric and his brave men leapt them to horse, and grasped their weapons—they knew themselves to be hateful!

Arthur saw this, noblest of kings; he saw a heathen earl advance against him, with seven hundred knights, all ready to fight. The earl himself approached before all his troop, and Arthur himself rode before all his host. Arthur the bold took Ron in hand;

he extended (couched) the stark shaft, the stiff-minded king; his horse he let run, so that all the earth dinned. His shield he drew to his breast— the king was incensed—he smote Borel the earl throughout the breast, so that the heart sundered. And the king called anon, “The foremost is dead! Now help us the Lord, and the heavenly queen, who the Lord bore!” Then called Arthur, noblest of kings: “Now to them! now to them! The commencement is well done!” The Britons laid on them, as men should do on the wicked; they gave bitter strokes with axes and with swords. There fell of Childric’s men full two thousand, so that never Arthur lost ever one of his men; there were the Saxish men of all folk most wretched, and the Alemainish men most miserable of all people! Arthur with his sword wrought destruction; all that he smote at, it was soon destroyed! The king was all enraged as is the wild boar, when he in the beech-wood meeteth many swine. Childric saw this, and gan him to turn, and bent him over the Avon, to save himself. And Arthur approached to him, as if it were a lion, and drove them to the flood, there many were slain; they sunk to the bottom five-and-twenty hundred, so that all Avon’s stream was bridged with steel! Childric over the water fled, with fifteen hundred knights; he thought forth to push, and sail over the sea. Arthur saw Colgrim climb to the mount, retreat to the hill that standeth over Bath; and Baldulf went after him, with seven thousand knights; they thought on the hill to withstand nobly, defend them with weapons, and do injury to Arthur.

When Arthur saw, noblest of kings, where Colgrim withstood, and eke battle wrought, then called the king, keenly loud: “My bold thanes, advance to the hills! For yesterday was Colgrim of all men keenest, but now it is to him all as to the goat, where he guards the hill; high upon the hill he fighteth with horns, when the wild wolf approacheth toward him. Though the wolf be alone, without each herd, and there were in a fold five hundred goats, the wolf to them goeth, and all them biteth. So will I now to-day Colgrim all destroy; I am the wolf and he is the goat; the man shall die!” The yet called Arthur, noblest of kings: “Yesterday was Baldulf of all knights boldest, but now he standeth on the hill, and beholdeth the Avon, how the steel fishes lie in the stream! Armed with sword, their life is destroyed; their scales float like gold-dyed shields; there float their fins, as if it were spears. These are marvellous things come to this land; such beasts on the hill, such fishes in the stream! Yesterday was the kaiser keenest of all kings; now is he become a hunter, and horns him follow; he flieth over the broad weald; his hounds bark; he hath beside Bath his hunting deserted; from his deer he flieth, and we it shall fell, and his bold threats bring to nought; and so we shall enjoy our rights gained.” Even with the words that the king said, he drew his shield high before his breast; he grasped his long spear, his horse he gan spur. Nigh all so swift as the fowl flieth, five-and-twenty thousand of brave men, mad under arms, followed the king; they proceeded to the hill with great strength, and smote upon Colgrim with exceeding smart strokes. And Colgrim them there received, and felled the Britons to ground; in the foremost attack fell five hundred.

Arthur saw that, noblest of kings, and wrathed him wondrously much, and thus gan to call Arthur, the noble man: “Where be ye, Britons, my bold men! Here stand before us our foes all chosen; my good warriors, lay we them to the ground!” Arthur grasped his sword right, and he smote a Saxish knight, so that the sword that was so good at the teeth stopt; and he smote another, who was this knight’s brother, so that his helm and his head fell to the ground, the third blow he soon gave, and a knight in two clave. Then were the Britons greatly emboldened, and laid on the Saxons laws (blows) most strong with their long spears and with swords most strong; so that the Saxons there fell, and made their death-time, by hundreds and hundreds sank to the ground, by thousands and thousands fell there ever on the ground! When Colgrim saw where Arthur came toward him, Colgrim might not for the slaughtered flee on any side; there fought Baldulf beside his brother. Then called Arthur with loud voice: “Here I come, Colgrim! to the realm we two shall reach; now we shall divide this land, as shall be to thee loathest of all!” Even with the words that the king said, his broad sword he up heaved, and hardly down struck, and smote Colgrim’s helm, so that he clove it in the midst, and clove

asunder the burny’s hood, so that it (the sword) stopt at the breast. And he smote toward Baldulf with his left hand, and struck off the head, forth with the helm.

Then laughed Arthur, the noble king, and thus gan to speak with gameful words: “Lie thou there, Colgrim; thou wert climbed too high; and Baldulf, thy brother, he by thy side; now set I all this kingdom in your own hands; dales and downs, and all my good folk! Thou climbed on this hill wondrously high, as if thou wouldst ascend to heaven; but now thou shalt to hell, and there thou mayest know much of thy kindred. And greet thou there Hengest, that was fairest of knights, Ebissa, and Ossa, Octa, and more of thy kin, and bid them there dwell winter and summer; and we shall here in land live in bliss, pray for your souls, that happiness never come to them; and here shall your yones lie, beside Bath!”

Arthur, the king, called Cador, the keen;—of Cornwall he was earl, the knight was most keen:—“Hearken to me, Cador, thou art mine own kin. Now is Childric flown, and awayward gone; he thinketh with safety again to come hither. But take of my host five thousand men, and go forth-right, by day and by night, until thou come to the sea, before Childric; and all that thou mayest win, possess it with joy; and if thou mayest with evil kill there the kaiser, I will give thee all Dorset to meed.” All as the noble king these words had said, Cador sprang to horse, as spark it doth from fire; full seven thousand followed the earl. Cador the keen, and much of his kindred, proceeded over wealds, and over wilderness, over dales and over downs, and over deep waters. Cador knew the way that toward his country lay, by the nearest he proceeded full surely right toward Totnes, day and night, until he came there forth-right, so that Childric never knew any manner of his coming. Cador came to the country before Childric, and caused to advance before him all the folk of the land, churls full sagacious, with clubs exceeding great, with spears and with great staves, chosen for the purpose, and placed them all clean into the ships’ holds, and ordered them there to stoop low, that Childric were not aware of them, and when his folk came, and in would climb, to grasp their bats, and bravely on smite; with their staves and with their spears to murder Childric’s host. The churls did all, as Cador them taught. To the ships proceeded the valiant churls; in every ship a hundred and half. And Cador the keen withdrew, in toward a wood high, five miles from the place where the ships stood, and hid him a while, wondrously still. And Childric soon approached, over the weald, and would flee to the ships, and push from land. So soon as Cador saw this, who was the earl keen, that Childric was in land, between him and the churls, then called Cador, with loud voice: “Where be ye, knights, brave men and active? Bethink ye what Arthur, who is our noble king, at Bath besought us, ere we went from the host. Lo! where Childric wendeth, and will flee from the land, and thinketh to pass to Alemaine, where his ancestors are, and will obtain an army, and eft come hither, and will fare in hither; and thinketh to avenge Colgrim, and Baldulf, his brother, who rest at Bath. But he never shall abide the day, he shall not, if we may prevent him!”

Even with the speech, that the powerful earl spake, and promptly he gan ride, that was stern in mood, the warriors most keen advanced out of the wood-shaw, and after Childric pursued, the strong and the rich Childric’s knights looked behind them; they saw over the weald the standards wind, approach over the fields five thousand shields. Then became Childric careful in heart, and these words said the powerful kaiser: “This is Arthur the king, who will us all kill, flee we now quickly, and into ship go, and voyage forth with the water, reck we never whither!” When Childric the kaiser had said these words, then gan he to flee exceeding quickly, and Cador the keen came soon after him. Childric and his knights came to ship forthright; they weened to shove the strong ships from the land. The churls with their bats were there within, the bats they up heaved, and adown right swung, there was soon slain many a knight with their clubs; with their pitch-forks they felled them to ground, and Cador and his knights slew them behind. Then saw Childric, that it befell to them evilly; that all his mickle folk fell to the ground, now saw he there beside a hill exceeding great, the water floweth there under, that is named Teine, the hill is named Teinewic, thitherward fled Childric, as quickly as

he might, with four-and-twenty knights. Then Cador saw, how it then fared there, that the kaiser fled, and toward the hill retreated, and Cador pursued after him, as speedily as he might, and came up to him, and overtook him soon. Then said Cador, the earl most keen: "Abide, abide, Childric! I will give thee Teinewic!" Cador heaved up his sword, and he Childric slew. Many that there fled, to the water they drew, in Teine the water, there they perished; Cador killed all that he found alive; and some they crept into the wood, and all he them there destroyed. When Cador had overcome them all, and eke all the land taken, he set peace most good, that thereafter long stood, though each man bare in hand rings of gold, durst never any man greet another evilly.

Arthur was forth marched into Scotland; for Howel lay in Clud, fast inclosed. The Scots had besieged him with their wicked crafts, and if Arthur were not the earlier come, then were Howel taken, and all his folk there slain, and deprived of life day. But Arthur came soon, with good strength, and the Scots gan to flee far from the land, into Moray, with a mickle host. And Cador came to Scotland, where he Arthur found. Arthur and Cador proceeded into Clud, and found Howel there, with great bliss in health, of all his sickness whole he was become; great was the bliss that then was in the burgh! The Scots were in Moray, and there thought to dwell, and with their bold words made their boast, and said that they would rule the realm, and Arthur there abide, with bold strength, for Arthur durst never for his life come there. When Arthur heard, void of fear, what the Scots had said with their scornful words, then said Arthur, noblest of kings: "Where art thou, Howel, highest of my kindred, and Cador the keen, out of Cornwall? Let the trumpets blow, and assemble our host, and at the midnight we shall march forth right toward Moray, our honour to win. If the Lord will it, who shaped the daylight, we shall them tell sorrowful tales, and fell their boast, and themselves kill." At the midnight Arthur forth-right arose; horns men gan to blow with loud sound; knights gan arise, and stern words to speak. With a great army he marched into Moray; forth gan press thirteen thousand in the foremost flock, men exceeding keen. Afterwards came Cador, the Earl of Cornwall, with seventeen thousand good thanes. Next came Howel, with his champions exceeding well, with one-and-twenty thousand noble champions. Then came Arthur himself, noblest of kings; with seven-and-twenty thousand followed them afterward; the shields there glistened, and light it gan to dawn.

The tidings came to the Scots, there where they dwelt, how Arthur the king came toward their land, exceeding quickly, with innumerable folk. Then were they fearfullest, who ere were boldest, and gan to flee exceeding quickly into the water, where wonders are enow! That is a marvellous lake, set in middle-earth, with fen, and with reed, and with water exceeding broad; with fish, and with fowl, with evil things! The water is immeasurably broad; nikers therein bathe; there is play of elves in the hideous pool. Sixty islands are in the long water; in each of the islands is a rock high and strong; there nest eagles, and other great fowls. The eagles have a law by every king's day; whensoever any army cometh to the country, then fly the fowls far into the sky, many hundred thousands, and mickle fight make. Then is the folk without doubt, that sorrow is to come to them from people of some kind, that will seek the land. Two days or three thus shall this token be, ere foreign men approach to the land. Yet there is a marvellous thing to say of the water; there falleth in the lake, on many a side, from dales and from downs, and from deep valleys, sixty streams, all there collected; yet never out of the lake any man findeth that thereout they flow, except a small brook at one end, that from the lake falleth, and wendeth very stillly into the sea. The Scots were dispersed with much misery, over all the many mounts that were in the water. And Arthur sought ships, and gan to enter them; and slew there without number, many and enow; and many a thousand there was dead, because all bread failed them. Arthur the noble was on the east side; Howel the good was on the south half; and Cador the keen guarded them by the north; and his inferior folk he set all by the west side. Then were the Scots accounted for sots, where they lay around the cliffs, fast inclosed; there were sixty thousand with sorrow destroyed.

Then was come into haven the King of Ireland; twelve miles from Arthur, where he lay with an army, to help the Scots, and

Howel to destroy. Arthur heard this, noblest of kings, and took one host of his, and thitherward marched; and found the King Gillomar, who was come there to land. And Arthur fought with him, and would give him no peace (quarter), and felled the Irish men exceedingly to the ground. And Gillomar with twelve ships departed from the land, and proceeded to Ireland, with harm most strong. And Arthur in the land slew all that he found; and afterwards he went to the lake, where he left his relation Howel the fair, noblest of Britain, except Arthur, noblest of kings. Arthur found Howel, where he was by the haven, by the broad lake, where he had abode. Then rejoiced greatly the folk in the host, of Arthur's arrival, and of his noble deeds; there was Arthur forth-right, two days and two nights. The Scots lay over the rocks, many thousands dead, with hunger destroyed, most miserable of all folk!

On the third day, it gan to dawn fair; then came toward the host all that were hooded, and three wise bishops, in book well learned; priests and monks, many without number; canons there came, many and good, with all the reliques that were noblest in the land, and yearned Arthur's peace, and his compassion. Thither came the women, that dwelt in the land; they carried in their arms their miserable children; they wept before Arthur wondrously much, and their fair hair threw to the earth; cut off their locks, and there down laid at the king's feet, before all his people; set their nails to their face, so that afterwards it bled. They were naked nigh (nearly) all clean; and sorrowfully they gan to call to Arthur the king, and together thus said, where they were in affliction: "King, we are on earth most wretched of all folk; we yearn thy mercy, through the mild God! Thou hast in this land our people slain, with hunger and with strife, and with many kind of harms; with weapon, with water, and with many mischiefs our children made fatherless and deprived of comfort. Thou art a Christian man, and we are also; the Saxish men are heathen hounds. They came to this land, and this folk here killed; if we obeyed them, that was because of our harm, for we had no man that might accord us with them. They did us much woe, and thou dost to us also; the heathens us hate, and the Christians make us sorrowful;— whereto and what shall become of us!"—quoth the women to the king. "Give us yet the men alive, who lie over these rocks; and if thou givest grace to this multitude, thy honour will be the greater, now and evermore. Lord Arthur our king, loosen our bonds! Thou has taken (conquered) all this land, and all this folk is overcome; we are under thy foot; in thee is all the remedy."

Arthur heard this, noblest of kings; this weeping and this lament, and immoderate sorrow; then took he to counsel, and had pity in heart; he found in his counsel to do what they him prayed, he gave them life, he gave them limb, and their land to hold. He caused the trumpets to be blown, and the Scots to be summoned; and they came out of the rocks to the ships; on every side approached toward land. They were greatly harmed by the sharp hunger; and oaths they swore, that they would not deceive; and they then gave hostages to the king, and all full soon became the king's men. And then they gan depart; the folk there separated, each man to the end, where he was dwelling, and Arthur there set peace, good with the best.

Then said Arthur: "Where art thou, Howel, my relation, dearest of men to me? Seest thou this great lake, where the Scots are harmed, seest thou these high trees, and seest thou these eagles fly? In this fen is fish innumerable. Seest thou these islands, that stand over this water?" Marvellous it seemed to Howel, of such a sight, and he wondered greatly by the water-flood, and thus there spake Howel, of noble race: "Since I was born man of my mother's bosom, saw I in no land things thus wonderful, as I here before me behold with eyes!" The Britons wondered wondrously much. Then spake Arthur, noblest of kings: "Howel, mine own relative, dearest to me of men, listen to my words, of a much greater wonder that I will tell to thee in my sooth speech. By this lake's end, where this water floweth, is a certain little lake, to the wonder of men! It is in length four-and-sixty palms; it is in measure in breadth five-and-twenty feet; five feet it is deep, elves it dug! Four-cornered it is, and therein is fish of four kinds, and each fish in his end where he findeth his kind, may there none go to other, except all as belongeth to his kind. Was never any man born, nor of so wise craft chosen, live he ever so long, that may understand it,

what letteth (hindereth) the fish to swim to the others; for there is nought between but water clean!" The yet spake Arthur, noblest of kings: "Howel, in this land's end, nigh the sea-strand, is a lake exceeding great—the water is evil—and when the sea floweth, as if it would rage, and falleth in the lake exceeding quickly, the lake is never the more increased in water. But when the sea falleth in (ebbs), and the ground becomes fair, and in it is all in its old seat, then swelleth the lake, and the waves darken; out the waves there leap, exceeding great, flow out on the land, and the people soon terrify. If any man cometh there, that knoweth nought thereof, to behold the marvel by the sea strand, if he turneth his face toward the lake, be he nought (never) so low born, full well he shall be saved, the water glideth him beside, and the man there remaineth easy, after his will he dwelleth there full still, so that he is not because of the water anything injured!" Then said Howel, noble man of Brittany: "Now I hear tell a wonderful story, and marvellous is the Lord that it all made!"

Then said Arthur, noblest of kings. "Blow ye my horns with loud noise, and say ye to my knights, that I will march forth-right." Trumpets there were blown, horns there resounded; bliss was in the host with the busy king, for each was solaced, and proceeded toward his land. And the king forbade them, by their bare life, that no man in the world should be so mad, nor person so unwise, that he should break his peace; and if any man did it, he should suffer doom. Even with the words the army marched, there sung warriors marvellous songs of Arthur the king, and of his chieftains, and said in song, to this world's end never more would be such a king as Arthur, through all things, king nor caiser, in ever any realm!

Arthur proceeded to York, with folk very surprising (numerous), and dwelt there six weeks with much joy. The burgh walls were broken and fallen down, that Childric all consumed, and the halls all clean. Then called the king a distinguished priest, Pirai,—he was an exceeding wise man, and learned in book:—"Pirai, thou art mine own priest, the easier it shall be for thee." The king took a rood, holy and most good, and gave to Pirai in hand, and therewith very much land, and the archbishop's staff he there gave to Pirai;—ere was Pirai a good priest, now is he archbishop! Then bade him Arthur, noblest of kings, that he should arear churches, and restore the hymns, and take charge of God's folk, and rule them fair. And he bade all his knights to deem right (just) dooms, and the earth-tillers to take to their craft, and every man to greet other. And what man soever did worse than the king had ordered, he would drive him to a bare burning, and if it were a base man, he should for that hang. The yet spake Arthur, noblest of kings, ordered that each man who had lost his land by whatsoever kind of punishment he were bereaved, that he should come again, full quickly and full soon—the rich and the low—and should have eft his own, unless he were so foully conditioned, that he were traitor to his lord, or toward his lord forsworn, whom the king should deem lost (beyond the limit of pardon). There came three brethren, that were royally born, Loth, and Angel, and Urien;—well are such three men! These three chieftains came to the king, and set on their knees before the caiser:—"Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of kings, and thy people with thee; ever may they well be! We are three brethren, born of kings. All our rightful land is gone out of our hand; for the heathen men have made us poor, and wasted us all Leoneis, Scotland, and Moray. And we pray thee, for God's love, that thou be to us in aid, and for thy great honour, that thou be mild to us, and give us our rightful land; and we shall love thee, and hold thee for lord, in each land-wise." Arthur heard this, noblest of kings, how these three knights fair besought him; he had compassion in heart, and began speak, and said these words—best of all kings:—"Urien, become my man; thou shalt to Moray again; thereof thou shalt be called king of the land, and high in my court (or host), with thy forces. And to Angel I set in hand Scotland altogether; to have it in hand, and be king of the land, from the father to the son; thereof thou shalt my man become. And thou, Loth, my dear friend—God be to thee mild!—thou hast my sister to wife; the better it shall be for thee. I give thee Leoneis, that is a land fair; and I will lay (add) thereto lands most good, beside the Humber, worth an hundred pounds. For my father Uther, the while that he was king here, loved well his daughter, who was his de-

sire esteemed; and she is my sister, and sons she hath twain; they are to me in land dearest of all children." Thus spake Arthur the king. Then was Walwain a little child; so was the other, Modred his brother. But alas! that Modred was born; much harm therefore came! Arthur proceeded to London, and with him his people; he held in the land a mickle husting, and established all the laws that stood in his elders' days; all the good laws that era here stood; he set peace, he set protection, and all freedoms.

From thence he marched to Cornwall, to Cadur's territory; he found there a maid extremely fair. This maiden's mother was of Romanish men, Cadur's relative; and the maid Cadur on him bestowed, and he received her fair, and softly her fed. She was of noble race, of Romanish men; was in no land any maid so fair, of speech and of deeds, and of manners most good; she was named Wenhaver, fairest of women. Arthur took her to wife, and loved her wondrously much; this maiden he gan wed, and took her to his bed. Arthur was in Cornwall all the winter there; and all for Wenhaver's love, dearest of women to him.

When the winter was gone, and summer came there anon, Arthur bethought him what he might do, that his good folk should not lie there inert. He marched to Exeter, at the midfeast (St. John Baptist?), and held there his husting of his noble folk, and said that he would go into Ireland, and win all the kingdom to his own hand; unless the King Gillomar the sooner came ere to him, and spake with him with good will, and yearned Arthur's peace, he would waste his land, and go to him evilly in hand, with fire and with steel work hostile game, and the land-folk slay, who would stand against him. Even with the words that the king said, then answered the folk, fair to the king: "Lord king, hold thy word, for we are all ready, to go and to ride over all at thy need." There was many a bold Briton that had boar's glances; heaved up their brows, enraged in their thought. They went toward their inns, knights with their men: they got ready burnies, prepared helmets, they wiped their dear horses with linen cloths; they sheared, they shod the men were bold! Some shaped (or shaved) horn; some shaped bone; some prepared steel darts; some made thongs, good and very strong; some bent spears, and made ready shields. Arthur caused to be bidden over all his kingdom, that every good knight should come to him forth-right, and every brave man should come forth-right anon; and whoso should remain behind, his limbs he should lose, and whoso should come gladly, he should become rich.

Seven nights after Easter, when men had fasted, then came all the knights to ship forth-right; the wind stood to them in hand (favourably), that drove them to Ireland. Arthur marched in the land, and the people destroyed; much folk he there slew, and he took cattle enow; and ever he ordered each man church-peace to hold. The tiding came to the king, who was lord of the land, that Arthur the king was come there, and much harm there wrought. He assembled all his people, over his kingdom; and his Irish folk marched to the fight, against Arthur the noble king. Arthur and his knights they weaponed them forth-right, and advanced against them, a numerous folk. Arthur's men were with arms all covered, the Irish men were nearly naked, with spears and with axes, and with saxes exceeding sharp. Arthur's men let fly at them numerous darts, and killed the Irish folk; and greatly it felled; they might not this sustain, through any kind of thing, but fled away quickly, very many thousands. And Gillomar the king fled, and awayward drew, and Arthur pursued after him, and caught the king; he took by the hand the king of the land.

Arthur the noble sought lodging; in his mood it was the easier to him, that Gillomar was so nigh him. Now did Arthur, noblest of kings, very great friendship before all his folk, he caused the king to be clothed with each pride (richly), and eke by Arthur he sate, and eke with himself ate; with Arthur he drank winethat to mm was mickle unthank. Nevertheless when he saw that Arthur was most glad, then said Gillomar to himin his heart he was sore: "Lord Arthur, thy peace! Give me limb and give me life, and I will become thy man, and deliver thee my three sons, my dear sons, to do all thy will. And yet I will do more, if thou wilt give me grace; I will deliver thee hostages exceeding rich, children some sixty, noble and most mighty. And yet I will more, if thou givest me grace; each year of my land seven thousand pounds, and send

them to thy land, and sixty marks of gold. And yet I will more, if thou wilt give me grace; and all the steeds, with all their trappings, the hawks, and the hounds, and my rich treasures I give thee in hand, of all my land. And when thou hast this done, I will take the reliques of Saint Columkille, who did God's will, and Saint Brandan's head, that God himself hallowed, and Saint Bride's right foot, that is holy and most good, and reliques enow, that came out of Rome, and swear to thee in sooth, that I will thee not deceive; but I will love thee, and hold thee for lord, hold thee for high king, and myself be thy underling."

Arthur heard this, noblest of kings, and he gan laugh with loud voice, and he gan answer with gracious words: "Be now glad, Gillomar; be not thy heart sore; for thou art a wise man—the better therefore shall it be to thee, for ever one ought worthily a wise man to greet,—for thy wisdom shall it not be the worse for thee, much thou me offerest, the better it shall be to thee. Here forth right, before all my knights, I forgive thee the more, all the half-part, of gold and of treasure; but thou shalt become my man, and half the tribute send each year into my land. Half the steeds, and half the weeds (garments), half the hawks, and half the hounds, that thou me offerest, I will relinquish to thee, but I will have the children of thy noble men, who are to them dearest of all; I may the better believe thee. And so thou shalt dwell in thy honour in thy kingdom, in thy right territory; and I will give to thee, that the king shall not do wrong to thee, unless he pay for it with his bare back!" Thus it said Arthur, noblest of kings. Then had he all Ireland all together in his own hand, and the king became his man, and delivered him his three sons.

Then spake Arthur to his good knights: "Go we to Iceland, and take we it in our hand." The host there marched, and to Iceland came. The king was named Ælcus, high man of the land, he heard the tidings of Arthur the king; he did all as a wiseman, and marched against him anon; anon forth-right, with sixteen knights; he bare in his hand a mickle wand (sceptre) of gold. So soon as he saw Arthur, he bent him on his knees, and quoth these words to him—the king was afraid:—"Welcome, sir Arthur! welcome, lord! Here I deliver thee in hand all together Iceland, thou shalt be my high king, and I will be thy underling. I will obey thee, as man shall do his master, and I will become here thy man, and deliver thee my dear son, who is named Escol; and thou shalt him honour (or reward), and dub him to knight, as thine own man. His mother I have to wife, the king's choice daughter of Russia. And eke each year I will give thee money, seven thousand pounds of silver and gold, and in every counsel be ready at thy need. This I will swear to thee, upon my sword; the relique is in the hilt, the noblest of this land; like as me shall like, will I never be false to thee!"

Arthur heard this noblest of kings. Arthur was winsome where he had his will, and he was exceeding stern with his enemies. Arthur heard the mild words of the monarch; he granted him all that he yearned; hostages and oaths, and all his proffers. Then heard say sooth words the King of Orkney, exceeding keen, who was named Gonwais, a heathen warrior, that Arthur the king would come to his land; with a mickle fleet sail to his country. Gonwais proceeded towards him, with his wise thanes, and set to Arthur in hand all Orkney's land, and two-and-thirty islands, that thither in heth, and his homage, with much reverence. And he had (made) to him in covenant, before all his people, each year to wit, full sixty ships at his own cost to bring them to London, filled truly with good sea-fish. This covenant he confirmed, and hostages he found, and oaths he swore good, that he would not deceive. And afterwards he took leave, and forth he gan wend:—"Lord, have well good day! I will come when I may, for now thou art my lord, dearest of all kings." When Arthur had done this, the yet he would more undertake; he took his good writs, and sent to Gutlond; and greeted the King Doldanim, and bade him soon come to him, and himself become his man, and bring with him his two sons.—"And if thou wilt not that, do what thou wilt, and I will send thee sixteen thousand noble warriors, to thy mickle harm, who shall waste thy land, and slay thy people, and set the land as to them best seemeth, and thyself bind, and to me bring." The king heard this, the threat of the kaiser, and he speedily took his fair weeds, hounds and hawks, and his good horses, much silver, much gold; his two sons in his hand. And forth he gan wend to Arthur

the king, and said these words Doldanim the good: "Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of kings! Here I bring twain, my sons both; their mother is of king's race, she is mine own queen; I won her with spoil, out of Russia. Here I deliver thee my dear sons, and myself I will become thy man. And I will send thee tribute of my land, every year as thin? bestowed, I will send thee into London seven thousand pounds. That I will swear, that I will never be false, but here I will become thy man—thy honour is the greater—so long as is ever, I will deceive thee never!"

Arthur took his messengers, and sent to Winetland, to Rumareth the king, and bade him know in haste, that he had in his hand Britain and Scotland, Gutland and Ireland, Orcany and Iceland. He ordered Rumareth to come, and bring him his eldest son; and if he would not do that, he would drive him from land, and if he might him capture, he would slay him or hang, and destroy all his land, his people exterminate. Rumareth heard this, the rich King of Winet; greatly he was afraid, all as the others were ere; loath to him were the tidings from Arthur the king. Nevertheless the King Rumareth hearkened counsels; he took his eldest son, and twelve good earls, and proceeded to Arthur the noble king, and sate at his feet, and gan him fair greet: "Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of Britons! I hight Rumareth, the King of Winetland, enow I have heard declared of thy valour; that thou art wide known, keenest of all kings. Thou hast won many kingdom all to thine own hand, there is no king in land that may thee withstand, king nor kaiser, in ever any combat; of all that thou beginnest, thou dost thy will. Here am I to thee come, and brought thee my eldest son; here I set thee in hand myself and my kingdom, and my dear son, and all my people, my wife and my weeds, and all my possessions, on condition that thou give me protection against thy fierce attacks. And be thou my high king, and I will be thy underling, and send thee to hand five hundred pounds of gold; these gifts I will thee find, every year."

Arthur granted him all that the king yearned, and afterwards he held communing with his good thanes, and said that he would return again into this land, and see Wenhaver, the comely queen of the country. Trumpets he caused to be blown, and his army to assemble; and to ship marched the thanes wondrous blithe. The wind still stood them at will; weather as they would; blithe they were all therefore; up they came to Grumesby. That heard soon the highest of this land, and to the queen came tidings of Arthur the king, that he was come in safety, and his folk in prosperity. Then were in Britain joys enow! Here was fiddling and song, here was harping among, pipes and trumps sang there merrily. Poets there sung of Arthur the king, and of the great honour, that he had won. Folk came in concourse of many kind of land; wide and far the folk was in prosperity. All that Arthur saw, all it submitted to him, rich men and poor, as the hail that falleth; was there no Briton so wretched, that he was not enriched!

Here man may tell of Arthur the king, how he afterwards dwelt here twelve years, in peace and in amity, in all fairness. No man fought with him, nor made he any strife; might never any man be-think of bliss that were greater in any country than in this; might never man know any so mickle joy, as was with Arthur, and with his folk here!

I may say how it happened, wondrous though it seem. It was on a yule-day, that Arthur lay in London; then were come to him men of all his kingdoms, of Britain, of Scotland, of Ireland, of Iceland, and of all the lands that Arthur had in hand; and all the highest thanes, with horses and with swains. There were come seven kings' sons, with seven hundred knights; without the folk that obeyed Arthur. Each had in heart proud thoughts, and esteemed that he were better than his companion. The folk was of many a land; there was mickle envy; for the one accounted himself high, the other much higher. Then blew men the trumpets, and spread the tables; water men brought on floor, with golden bowls; next soft clothes, all of white silk. Then sate Arthur down, and by him Wenhaver the queen; next sate the earls, and thereafter the barons; next the knights, all as men them disposed. And the high-born men bare the meat even forth-right then to the knights; then toward the thanes, then toward the swains, then toward the porters, forth at the board. The people became angered, and blows there were rife; at first they threw the loaves, the while that they

lasted, and the silver bowls, filled with wine, and afterwards with the fists approached to necks. Then leapt there forth a young man, who came out of Winetland; he was given to Arthur to hold as hostage; he was Rumareth's son, the King of Winet. Thus said the knight there to Arthur the king: "Lord Arthur, go quickly into thy chamber, and thy queen with thee, and thy known relatives, and we shall decide this combat against these foreign warriors." Even with the words he leapt to the board where lay the knives before the sovereign; three knives he grasped, and with the one he smote the knight in the neck, that first began the same fight, so that his head on the floor fell to the ground. Soon he slew another, this same thane's brother; ere the swords came, seven he felled. There was fight exceeding great; each man smote other; there was much blood shed, mischief was among the folk!

Then approached the king out of his chamber; with him an hundred nobles, with helms and with burnies; each bare in his right hand a white steel brand. Then called Arthur, noblest of kings: "Sit ye, sit ye quickly, each man on his life! And whoso will not that do, he shall be put to death. Take ye me the same man, that this fight first began, and put withy on his neck, and draw him to a moor, and put him in a low fen, there he shall lie. And take ye all his dearest kin, that ye may find, and strike off the heads of them with your broad swords, the women that ye may find of his nearest kindred, carve ye off their noses, and let their beauty go to destruction; and so I will all destroy the race that he of came. And if I evermore subsequently hear, that any of my folk, of high or of low, eft arear strife on account of this same slaughter, there shall ransom him neither gold nor any treasure, fine horse nor war-garment, that he should not be dead, or with horses drawn in pieces—that is of each traitor the law! Bring ye the reliques, and I will swear thereon; and so, knights, shall ye, that were at this fight, earls and barons, that ye will not it break." First swore Arthur, noblest of kings; then swore earls, then swore barons; then swore thanes, then swore swains, that they nevermore the strife would arear. Men took all the dead, and carried them to burial-place. Afterwards men blew the trumpets, with noise exceeding merry; were he lief, were he loath, each there took water and cloth, and then sate down reconciled to the board, all for Arthur's dread, noblest of kings. Cupbearers there thronged, gleemen there sung; harps gan resound, the people was in joy. Thus full seven nights was all the folk treated.

Afterwards it saith in the tale, that the king went to Cornwall; there came to him anon one that was a crafty workman, and met the king, and fair him greeted:—"Hail be thou, Arthur, noblest of kings' I am thine own man; through many land I have gone; I know of tree-works (carpentry) wondrous many crafts. I heard say beyond the sea new tidings, that thy knights gan to fight at thy board, on a midwinter's day many there fell; for their mickle mood wrought murderous play, and for their high lineage each would be within. But I will thee work a board exceeding fair, that thereat may sit sixteen hundred and more, all turn about, so that none be without; without and within, man against man. And when thou wilt ride, with thee thou mightest it carry, and set it where thou wilt, after thy will, and then thou needest never fear, to the world's end, that ever any moody knight at thy board may make fight, for there shall the high be even with the low." Timber was caused to be brought, and the board to be begun; in four weeks' time the work was completed.

At a high day the folk was assembled, and Arthur himself approached soon to the board, and ordered all his knights to the board forth-right. When all were seated, knights to their meat, then spake each with other, as if it were his brother; all they sate about; was there none without. Every sort of knight was there exceeding well disposed, all they were one by one (seated), the high and the low, might none there boast of other kind of drink other than his comrades, that were at the board. This was the same board that Britons boast of, and say many sorts of leasing, respecting Arthur the king. So doth every man, that another can love; if he is to him too dear, then will he lie, and say of him more honour than he is worthy; no man is he so wicked, that his friend will not act well to him. Eft if among folk enmity areareth, in ever any time between two men, men can say leasing of the hateful one, though he were the best man that ever ate at board, the man

that to him were loath, he can him last find! It is not all sooth nor all falsehood that minstrels sing; but this is the sooth respecting Arthur the king. Was never ere such king, so doughty through all things! For the sooth stands in the writings how it is befallen, from beginning to the end, of Arthur the king, no more nor less but as his laws (or acts) were.

But Britons loved him greatly, and oft of him lie, and say many things respecting Arthur the king that never was transacted in this worlds-realm! Enow may he say, who the sooth will frame, marvellous things respecting Arthur the king. Then was Arthur most high, his folk most fair, so that there was no knight well esteemed, nor of his manners (or deeds) much assured, in Wales nor in England, in Scotland nor in Ireland, in Normandy nor in France, in Flanders nor in Denmark, nor in ever any land, that on this side of Muntgiu standeth, that were esteemed good knight, nor his deeds accounted (brave or aught), unless he could discourse of Arthur, and of his noble court, his weapons, and his garments, and his horsemen, say and sing of Arthur the young, and of his strong knights, and of their great might, and of their wealth, and how well it them became. Then were he welcome in this worlds-realm, come whereso he came, and though he were at Rome, all that heard of Arthur tell, it seemed to them great marvel of the good king!

And so it was foreboded, ere he were born; so said him Merlin, that was a prophet great, that a king should come of Uther Pendragon, that gleemen should make a board of this king's breast, and thereto should sit poets most good, and eat their will, ere they thence departed, and wine-draughts out draw from this king's tongue, and drink and revel day and night; this game should last them to the world's end.

And yet said him Merlin more that was to come, that all that he looked on to his feet to him should bow. The yet said him Merlin, a marvel that was greater, that there should be immoderate care (sorrow) at this king's departure. And of this king's end will no Briton believe it, except it be the last death, at the great doom, when our Lord judgeth all folk. Else we cannot deem of Arthur's death, for he himself said to his good Britons, south in Cornwall, where Walwain was slain, and himself was wounded wondrously much, that he would fare into Avalon, into the island, to Argante the fair, for she would with balm heal his wounds,—and when he were all whole, he would soon come to them. This believed the Britons, that he will thus come, and look ever when he shall come to his land, as he promised them, ere he hence went.

Arthur was in the world wise king and powerful, good man and peaceful, his men him loved. Knights he had proud, and great in their mood, and they spake to the king of marvellous thing, and thus the assemblage said to the high king: "Lord Arthur, go we to the realm of France, and win all the land to thine own hand, drive away all the French, and their king slay; all the castles occupy, and set (garrison) them with Britons, and rule in the realm with fierce strength" Then answered Arthur, noblest of kings "Your will I will do, but ere (previously) I will go to Norway, and I will lead with me Loth my brother-in-law, he who is Walwain's father, whom I well love. For new tidings are come from Norway, that Sichelm the king is there dead, his people has left, and he hath ere bequeathed all his kingdom to Loth. For the king is of all bereaved, son and eke daughter, and Loth is his sister's son—the better to him shall it befall—for I will make him new king in Norway, and well instruct him to govern well the people. And when I have done thus, I will afterwards come home, and get ready my army, and pass into France, and if the king withstandeth me, and will not yearn my peace, I will fell him with fight to the ground"

Arthur caused to be blown horns and trumpets, and caused to be summoned to the sea the Britons most bold. Ships he had good by the sea-flood, fifteen hundred pushed from the land, and flew along the sea, as if they had flight (wings), and bent their course into Norway, with bold strength. So soon as they came, they took haven, with mickle strength they step (disembarked) on the realm Arthur sent his messengers wide over the land, and ordered them to come soon, and have Loth for king, and if they would not that, he would slay them all. Then they took their messengers, the Norwegian earls, and sent to the king, and bade him back go—"And if thou wilt not depart, thou shalt have here sorrow and care; for so

long as is ever, that shall never come to pass, that we shall raise a foreign man for king. For if Sichelme is departed (dead), here are others choice, whom we may by our will raise to be king. And this is the sooth; there is no other, either move thee awayward, and turn thee right homeward, either to-day a se'nnight, thou shalt have great fight."

The Norwegian earls betook them to counsel, that a king they would have of their own race, for all Sichelme's words they held to be folly.—"And so long as is ever, it shall not ever stand! But we shall take Riculf, who is an earl exceeding powerful, and raise him to be king—this is to us pleasing—and assemble our forces over all this country, and march towards Arthur, and defeat him with fight, and Loth we shall chase, and drive from land, or else we shall fell him with fight." They took Riculf, the Earl of Norway, and raised him to be king, though it were not to him by right, and they assembled their host over Norway's land. And Arthur on his part, over the land gan march; the land he through passed, and the burghs he consumed, goods he took enow, and much folk he there slew. And Riculf gan him ride against Arthur anon; together they came, and fight they began. The Britons advanced to them—woe there was rife! Swords exceeding long they plucked out of sheath; heads flew on the field, faces paled; man against man set shaft to breast; burnies there brake; the Britons were busy, shivered shields, warriors there fell! And so all the daylight lasted this great fight; moved they east, moved they west, there was it the worse to the Norwegians; moved they south, moved they north the Norwegians there fell. The Britons were bold, the Norwegians they killed; the Norwegian men there fell, five-and-twenty thousand, and Riculf the king was there slain, and deprived of life day; little there remained of the folk; whoso had the wretched life, they yearned Arthur's peace. Arthur looked on Loth, who was to him well dear, and thus gan to him to call, Arthur the rich man: "Loth, wend hither to me, thou art my dear relative. Here I give to thee all this kingdom; of me thou shalt it hold, and have me for protector."

Then was Walwain thither come, Loth's eldest son; from the pope of Rome, who was named Supplice, who long had him brought up, and made him knight. Full well was it bestowed, that Walwain was born to be man, for Walwain was full noble-minded, in each virtue he was good; he was liberal, and knight with the best. All Arthur's folk was greatly emboldened, for Walwain the keen, that was come to the host; and for his father Loth, who was chosen to be king. Then spake Arthur with him, and bade him hold good peace, and bade him love his peaceful people, and those that would not hold peace, to fell them to ground.

The yet called Arthur, noblest of kings: "Where be ye, my Britons? March ye now forth-right; prepare ye by the flood my good ships." All did the knights as Arthur them ordered. When the ships were ready, Arthur gan to the sea fare; with him he took his knights, his Norwegian thanes, and his bold Britons, and proceeded forth with the waves; and the doughty king came into Denmark; he caused his tents to be pitched, wide over the fields; trumpets he caused to be blown, and his coming to be announced.

Then was in Denmark a king of much might; he was named Æscil, the highest over the Danes; he saw that Arthur won all that was to him in will. Æscil the king bethought him what he might do; loath it was to him to lose his dear people. He saw that with strength he might not stand against Arthur, with ever any combat. He sent greeting to Arthur the king; hounds and hawks, and horses exceeding good; silver and red gold, with prudent words. And yet he did more, Æscil the great; he sent to the highest of Arthur's folk, and prayed them to intercede for him with the noble king; that he might his man become, and deliver his son for hostage, and each year send him tribute of his land, a boat of gold and of treasure, and of rich garments, filled from the top to the bottom, in safety. And afterwards he would swear, that he would not prove false. Arthur heard this, noblest of kings, that Æscil, King of the Danes, would be his underling, without any fight, he and all his knights. Then was gladdened Arthur the rich, and thus answered with mild words: "Well worth the man, that with wisdom obtaineth to him peace and amity, and friendship to hold! When he seeth that he is bound with strength, and his dear realm ready all to destruction, with art he must slacken his odious bonds." Arthur ordered the king to come, and bring his eldest son;

and he so did soon, the King of Denmark. Arthur's will soon he gan to fulfill; together they came, and were reconciled.

The yet said Arthur, noblest of kings: "Fare I will to France, with my mickle host. I will have of Norway nine thousand knights; and of Denmark I will lead nine thousand of the people; and of Orkney eleven hundred; and of Moray three thousand men; and of Galloway five thousand of the folk; and of Ireland eleven thousand, and of Britain my knights bold shall march before me, thirty thousand; and of Gutland I will lead ten thousand of the people; and of Frisland five thousand men; and of Little Britain Howel the bold, and with such folk France I will seek. And as I expect God's mercy, yet I will promise more; that of all the lands, that stand in my hand, I will order each brave man, that can bear his weapons, as he would wish to live, and have his limbs, that he go with me, to fight with Frolle, who is King of the French—slain he shall be!—he was born in Rome, of Romanish kin." Forth proceeded Arthur, until he came to Flanders, the land he gan conquer, and set it with his men. And next he marched thence, into Boulogne, and all Boulogne's land took it in his own hand.

And afterwards he took the way that in toward France lay. Then bade he his command to all his men, that fare wheresoever they should fare, they should take no whit, unless they might it obtain with right; with just purchase, in the king's host. Frolle heard that, where he was in France, of Arthur's speed (success), and of all his deeds; and how he all won that he looked on, and how it all to him submitted that he saw with eyes, then was the King Frolle horribly afraid! At the same time that this was transacted, the land of the French was named Gaul; and Frolle was from Rome come into France, and each year sent tribute of the land, ten hundred pounds of silver and of gold. Now heard Frolle, who was chief of France, of the great sorrow that Arthur did in the land. He sent messengers soon the nearest way toward Rome, and bade the Romanish folk advise them between, how many thousand knights they thither would send, that he might the easier fight with Arthur, and drive from the land Arthur the strong. Knights gan to ride out of Rome-land; five-and-twenty thousand proceeded toward France. Frolle heard this, with his mickle host, that the Romanish folk rode toward the land. Frolle and his host marched against them, so that they came together, keen men and brave, of all the earth an immense force.

Arthur heard that, noblest of kings, and assembled his army, and advanced against them. But never was there any king, that was alive on earth, that ever ere on land such folk (multitude) commanded; for from all the kingdoms that Arthur had in hand, forth he led with him all the keenest men, so that he knew never in the world how many thousands there were. So soon as they came together, Arthur and Frolle; hardly they greeted all that they met. Knights most strong grasped long spears, and rushed them together, with fierce strength. All day there were blows most rife; the folk fell to ground, and wrought destruction; the angry warriors sought the grass-bed; the helms resounded, murmured earls; shields there shivered, warriors gan fall. Then called Arthur, noblest of kings: "Where be ye, my Britons, my bold thanes? The day it forth goeth; this folk against us standeth. Cause we to glide to them sharp darts enow, and teach them to ride the way toward Rome!" Even with the words that Arthur then said, he sprang forth on steed, as spark doth of fire. Fifty thousand were following him; the hardy warriors rushed to the fight, and smote upon Frolle, where he was in the flock, and brought him to flight, with his mickle folk; there slew Arthur much folk and innumerable.

Then fled into Paris Frolle the powerful, and fastened the gates, with grief enow; and these words said, sorrowful in heart: "Liefere were it to me, that I were not born!" Then were in Paris grievous speeches, full surely, sorrowful cries; burghmen gan to tremble; the walls they gan repair, the gates they gan to form; meat they took, all that they came nigh; on each side they carried it to the burgh; thither came they all, that held with Frolle. Arthur heard that, noblest of kings, that Frolle dwelt in Paris, with an immense force, and said that he would Arthur withstand. To Paris marched Arthur, of fear void, and belay the walls, and areared his tents; on four sides he belay it (the city), four weeks and a day. The people that were there within were sore afraid, the burgh was within filled with men; and they ate soon the meat that was there gath-

ered.

When four weeks were gone, that Arthur was there stationed, then was in the burgh sorrow extreme, with the wretched folk that lay there in hunger, there was weeping, there was lament, and distress great. They called to Frolle, and bade him make peace; become Arthur's man, and his own honour enjoy, and hold the kingdom of Arthur the keen; and let not the wretched folk perish all with hunger. Then answered Frolle-free he was in heart:—"Nay, so help me God, that all dooms wieldeth, shall I never his man become, nor he my sovereign! Myself I will fight; in God is all the right!"

The yet spake Frolle, free man in heart: "Nay, so help me the Lord that shaped the daylight, will I nevermore yearn Arthur's grace; but fight I will, without any knight's aid, body against body, before my people; hand against hand, with Arthur the king! Whetherso of us is the weaker, soon he will be the leather; whetherso of us there may live, to his friends he will be the lifer; and whether of us that may of the other obtain the better (superiority), have he all this other's land, and set it in his own hand. This I will yearn, if Arthur will it grant; and this I will swear upon my sword. And hostages I will find, three kings' sons, that I will hold firmly this covenant; that I will it not violate, by my quick life! For lifer it is to me to lie dead, before my people, than that I should see them on the ground perish with hunger. For we have with fight destroyed our knights-men felled fifty thousand; and many a good woman have made miserable widow, many a child fatherless, and bereaved of comfort; and now this folk with hunger have wondrously harmed. It is better therefore betwixt ourselves to deal and to dispose of this kingdom with fight; and have it the better man, and possess it in joy!" Frolle took twelve knights, with these words forth-right, and sent them in message to Arthur the king, to know if he would hold this covenant, and with his own hand win the kingdom, or lie dead before, to the harm of his people; and if he it won, should have it in his power.

Arthur heard that, noblest of kings; was he never so blithe ere in his life, for the tiding liked to him from Frolle the king; and these words said Arthur the good: "Well saith Frolle, who is King of France; better it is that we two contest this realm, than there should be slain our brave thanes. This covenant I approve, before my people, at an appointed day to do what he me biddeth; that shall be to-morrow, before our men, that fight we shall by ourselves, and fall the worst of us! And whether (which) of us that goeth aback, and this fight will forsake, be he in each land proclaimed for a recreant! Then may men sing of one such king, that his brag (or threat) hath made, and his knighthood forsaken!"

Frolle heard that, who was King of France, that Arthur would fight himself, without any knight. Strong man was Frolle, and stark man in mood; and his boast he had made, before all his people, and he might not for much shame disgrace himself; quit his bold bragging that he had said in the burgh. But said he whatever he said, in sooth he it weened, that Arthur would it forsake, and no whit take to (accept) the fight. For if Frolle, who was King in France, had it known, that Arthur would grant him that he had yearned, he would not have done it for a shipful of gold! Nevertheless was Frolle to the fight exceeding keen; tall knight and strong man, and moody in heart; and said that he would hold the day, in the island that with water is surrounded—the island standeth full truly in the burgh of Paris.—"There I will with fight obtain my rights, with shield, and with steel, and with knight's weed; now to-morrow is the day; have it he that may it win!"

The tiding came to Arthur the king, that Frolle would with fight win France; was he never so blithe ere in his life! And he gan to laugh, with loud voice; and said these words Arthur the keen: "Now I know that Frolle will with me fight, to-morrow in the day, as he himself determined, in the island that with water is surrounded; for it becometh a king, that his word should stand. Let the trumpets blow, and bid my men, that every good man watch to-night for that, and pray our Lord, that all dooms wieldeth, that he preserve me from Frolle the fierce, and with his right hand protect me from disgrace. And if I may obtain this kingdom to mine own hand, every poor man the easier shall be, and work I will the great God's will! Now aid me thereto that all things may well do;

the high heavenly king stand me in help; for him I will love (or praise), the while that I live!"

There was all the long night songs and candle-light; loudly sung clerks holy psalms of God. When it was day on the morrow, people gan to stir. His weapons he took in hand, Arthur the strong; he threw on his back a garment most precious, a cheisil shirt, and a cloth kirtle; a burny exceeding precious, embroidered of steel. He set on his head a good helm; to his side he suspended his word Caliburn; his legs he covered with hose of steel, and placed on his feet spurs most good. The king with his weeds leapt on his steed; men reached to him a good shield; it was all clean of elephant's bone (ivory). Men gave him in hand a strong shaft; there was at the end a spear most fair; it was made in Caermarthen by a smith that hight Griffin; Uther it possessed, who was ere king here. When that the stern man was weaponed, then gan he to advance; then might he behold, who were there beside, the mighty king ride boldly; since this world was made, was it nowhere told, that ever any man so fair rode upon horse, as Arthur he was, son of Uther! Bold chieftains rode after the king; in the foremost flock forty hundred, noble warriors, clad in steel, bold Britons, busy with weapon. After that marched fifty hundred, that Walwain led, who was a bold champion. Afterwards there gan out follow sixty thousand Britons most bold; that was the rearward. There was the King Angel; there was Loth and Urine; there was Urine's son, named Ywain; there was Kay and Beduer, and commanded the host there; there was the King Howell, noble man of Brittany; Cadur there was eke, who was keen in flock; there was from Ireland Gillomar the strong; there was Gonwais the king, Orkney's darling; there was Doldanim the keen, out of Gothland, and Rumaret the strong, out of Winet-land; there was Aescil the king, Denmark's darling. Folk there was on foot, so many thousand men, that was never a man in this worlds-realm so wise, that might tell the thousands, in ever any speech, unless he had with right wisdom of the Lord, or unless he had with him what Merlin he had.

Arthur forth gan march, with innumerable folk; until he came full surely unto the burgh of Paris; on the west side of the water, with his mickle folk. On the east side was Frolle, with his great force, ready to the fight, before all his knights. Arthur took a good boat, and went therein, with shield and with steed, and with all his weeds (armour); and he shoved the strong ship from the land, and stept upon the island, and led his steed in his hand; his men that brought him there, as the king commanded, let the boat drive forth with the waves.

Frolle went into ship; the king was uneasy that he ever thought with Arthur to fight. He proceeded to the island, with his good weapons; he stept upon the island, and drew his steed after him; the men that brought him there, as the king commanded them, let the boat drive forth with the waves; and the two kings alone there remained.

Then men might behold, that were there beside, the folk on the land, exceedingly afraid; they climbed upon halls, they climbed upon walls; they climbed upon bowers, they climbed upon towers, to behold the combat of the two kings. Arthur's men prayed with much humility to God the good, and the holy his mother, that their lord might have there victory; and the others eke prayed for their king. Arthur stept in steel saddlebow, and leapt on his steed; and Frolle with his weeds leapt also on his steed; the one at his end, in the island, and the other at his end, in the island; they couched their shafts, the royal knights; they urged their steeds—good knights they were. Never was he found in ever any land, any man so wise, that should know it ere that time, whether (which) of the kings should lie overcome; for both they were keen knights, brave men and active, mickle men in might, and in force exceeding strong. They made ready their steeds; and together they gan ride; rushed fiercely, so that fire sprang after them! Arthur smote Frolle with might excessive strong, upon the high shield, so that it fell to the ground; and the steed that was good leapt out in the flood. Arthur out with his swordmischief was on the pointand struck upon Frolle, where he was in the flood, ere their combat were come to the end. But Frolle with his hand grasped his long spear, and observed Arthur anon, as he came nigh, and smote the bold steed in the breast, so that the spear pierced through, and

Arthur down drove. Then arose the multitudes' clamour, that the earth dinned again, the welkin resounded for shout of the folk. There would the Britons over the water pass, if Arthur had not started up very quickly, and grasped his good shield, adorned with gold, and against Frolle, with hostile glances cast before his breast his good broad shield. And Frolle to him rushed with his fierce assault, and up heaved his sword, and struck down right, and smote upon Arthur's shield, so that it fell on the field; the helm on his head, and his mail gan to give way, in front of his head; and he received a wound four inches long; it seemed not to him sore, for it was no more; the blood ran down over all his breast. Arthur was enraged greatly in his heart, and his sword Caliburne swung with main, and smote Frolle upon the helm, so that it parted in two; throughout the burnyshood, so that at his breast it (the sword) stopt. Then fell Frolle to the ground; upon the grass-bed his ghost he left. Then laughed the Britons, with loud voice; and people gan to fly exceeding quickly.

Arthur the powerful went to land, and thus gan to call, noblest of kings: "Where art thou, Walwain, dearest of men to me? Command these Rome-men all with peace to depart hence; each man enjoy his home, as God granteth it him; order each man to hold peace, upon pain of limb and upon life; and I will it order to-day a se'nright; command this folk then to march all together, and come to myself-the better it shall be for them. They shall perform homage to me with honour, and I will hold them in my sovereignty, and set laws most good among the people. For now shall the Romanish laws fall to the ground, that before stood here with Frolle, who lieth slain in the island, and deprived of life-day. Hereafter full soon shall his kindred of Rome hear tidings of Arthur the king, for I will speak with them, and break down Rome walls, and remind them how King Belin led the Britons in thither, and won to him all the lands that stand unto Rome."

Arthur proceeded to the gate, before the burgh wise men that took charge of the burgh, came, and let Arthur within, with all his men; delivered to him the halls, delivered to him the castles; delivered to him, full surely, all the burgh of Paristhere was mickle bliss with the British folk! The day came to burgh, that Arthur had set; came all the populace, and his men became. Arthur took his folk, and divided them in two; and the half part gave to Howel, and bade him march soon, with the mickle host, with the British men to conquer lands.

Howel did all thus as Arthur him bade; he conquered Berry, and all the lands thereby; Anjou and Touraine, Alverne and Gascony, and all the havens that belonged to the lands. Guitard hight the duke, who possessed Poitou; he would not submit to Howel, but held ever against him; he would ask no peace, but Howel fought with him; oft he felled the folk, and oft he made flight. Howel wasted all the land, and slew the people. When Guitard saw, who was lord in Poitou, that all his people went him to loss, with Howel he made peace, with all his host, and became Arthur's man, the noble king. Arthur became gracious to him, and loved him greatly, and bade him enjoy his land, for (because) he bowed to his feet;—then had Howel nobly succeeded!

Arthur had France, and freely it settled; he took then his host, and marched over all the territory; to Burgundy he proceeded, and set it in his hand; and afterwards he gan fare into Loraine, and all the lands set to himself in hand, all that Arthur saw, all it submitted to him; and afterwards he went, full truly, again home to Pans.

When Arthur had France established with good peace, settled and composed, so that prosperity was among the folk, then ordered he the old knights, that he had long retained, that they should come to the king, and receive their reward; for they many years had been his companions. To some he gave land, some silver and gold; to some he gave castles, some he gave clothes; bade them go in joy, and amend their sins; forbade them to bear weapon, because age upon them went, and bade them love God greatly in this life, that he at the end, full surely, might give them his paradise, that they might enjoy bliss with the angels. All the old knights proceeded to their land, and the young remained with their dear king. All the nine years Arthur dwelt there; nine years he held France freely in hand, and afterwards no longer the land he governed.

But the while that the kingdom stood in Arthur's hand, marvellous things came to the folk; many proud man Arthur made mild, and many a high man he held at his feet! It was on an Easter, that men had fasted, that Arthur on Easter-day had his noble men together; all the highest persons that belonged to France, and of all the lands that lay thither in; there he gave his knights all their rights; to each one he gave possessions, as he had earned. Thus quoth him Arthur, noblest of kings: "Kay, look thee hitherward; thou art mine highest steward; here I give thee Anjou, for thy good deeds, and all the rights that thither in are set. Kneel to me, Beduer; thou art my highest cup-bearer here; the while that I am alive, love thee I will. Here I give thee Neustrie, nearest to my realm." Then hight Neustrie the land that now hight Normandy. The same two earls were Arthur's dear men, at counsel and at communing, in every place. The yet said him Arthur, noblest of kings: "Wend thee hither, Howeldin; thou art my man and my kin; have thou Boulogne, and possess it in prosperity. Come near, Borel; thou art knight wise and wary; here I deliver thee the Mans, with honour, and possess thou it in prosperity, for thy good deeds." Thus Arthur the king dealt his lordly lands, after their actions; for he thought them to be worthy. Then were blithe speeches in Arthur's halls; there was harping and song, there were blisses among!

When Easter was gone, and April went from town, and the grass was rife, and the water was calm, and men gan to say that May was in town, Arthur took his fair folk, and proceeded to the sea, and caused his ships to be assembled, well with the best; and sailed to this land, and came up at London; up he came at London, to the bliss of the people. All it was blithe that saw him with eyes; soon they gan to sing of Arthur the king, and of the great worship that he had won There kissed father the son, and said to him welcome; daughter the mother, brother the other; sister kissed sister; the softer it was to them in heart. In many hundred places folk stood by the way, asking of things of many kind; and the knights told them of their conquests, and made their boast of mickle booty. Might no man say, were he man ever so skilled, of half the blisses that were with the Britons! Each fared at his need over this kingdom, from burgh to burgh, with great bliss; and thus it a time stood in the same wisebliss was in Britain with the bold king.

When Easter was gone, and summer came to land, then took Arthur his counsel, with his noble men, that he would in Kaerleon bear on him his crown, and on Whitsunday his folk there assemble. In those days men gan deem, that no burgh so fair was in any land, nor so widely known as Kaerleon by Usk, unless it were the rich burgh that is named Rome. The yet many a man was with the king in land, that pronounced the burgh of Kaerleon richer than Rome, and that Usk were the best of all waters. Meadows there were broad, beside the burgh; there was fish, there was fowl, and fairness enow; there was wood and wild deer, wondrous many; there was all the mirth that any man might think of. But never since Arthur thither came, the burgh afterwards thrived, nor ever may, between this and dooms-day. Some books say certainly that the burgh was bewitched, and that is well seen, sooth that it be. In the burgh were two minsters exceeding noble; one minster was of Saint Aaron; therein was mickle relique; the other of the martyr Saint Julian, who is high with the Lord; therein were nuns good, many a high born woman.

The bishop's stool was at Saint Aaron; therein was many a good man; canons there were, who known were wide; there was many a good clerk, who well could (were well skilled) in learning. Much they used the craft to look in the sky; to look in the stars, nigh and far;—the craft is named Astronomy. Well often they said of many things to the king; they made known to him what should happen to him in the land. Such was the burgh of Kaerleon; there was much wealth; there was much bliss with the busy king.

The king took his messengers, and sent over his land; bade come earls; bade come barons; bade come kings, and eke chieftains; bade come bishops, bade come knights; bade all the free men that ever were in the land; by their life he bade them be at Kaerleon on Whitsunday. Knights gan to ride exceeding wide, rode toward Kaerleon from lands of many kind. At the Whitsunday there came the King Angel, King of Scotland, with his fair folk; many

was the fair man that followed the king. Of Moray King Urien, and his fair son Ywam; Stater, King of South Wales, and Cadwal, the King of North Wales; Cador, Earl of Cornwall, whom the king loved; Morvith of Gloucester; Maurm of Winchester; Gurguint, Earl of Hereford, and Beof, Earl of Oxford; Cursal the bold, from Bath there came riding; Urgent of Chester; Jonathas of Dorchester; Arnalf of Salisbury, and Kinnmare of Canterbury; Bahen of Silchester; Wigen of Leicester; Argal, Earl of Warwick, with folk exceeding strange (or numerous); Dunwale, son of Apnes, and Kegem, son of Elauth; Kineus, that was Coit's son, and Cradoc, Catel's son, Ædlem, Cleclauk's son; Grimarc, Kinmark's son; Run, Margoit, and Netan; Clofard, Kincar, and Aican; Kenn, Neton, and Peredur; Madoc, Trahern, and Elidur. These were Arthur's noble earls, and the highest thanes brave of all this land, without (besides) the nobles of Arthur's board, that no man might ken, nor all the folk name. Then were archbishops three in this country; in London, and in York; and in Kaerleon, Saint Dubrich—he was a man exceeding holy, through all things excellent! At London lay the archbishop's stool, that to Canterbury was subsequently removed, after that Englishmen had won to them this land.

To tell the folk of Kaerleon, no man might it do! There was Gillomar the king, of Irish men the darling; Malverus, King of Iceland; Doldanet, King of Gutland; Kinkalin of Frisland; and Æscil, King of Denmark. There was Loth the keen, who was king by the North; and Gonwais, King of Orkney, of outlaws the darling. Thither came the fierce man, the Earl of Boulogne, who was named Laeyer, and his people with him; of Flanders the Earl Howeldin; of Chartres the Earl Geryn. This man brought with him all the French men; twelve earls most noble, who ruled over France. Guitard, Earl of Poitiers; Kay, Earl of Angers; Bedver, Earl of Normandy the land then hight Neustne;—of the Mans came the Earl Borel; of Brittany the Earl Howel. Howel the earl was free man, and fair were his weeds. And all the French folk were clothed fair, all well weaponed, and horses they had fat. There were besides fifteen bishops. Was there no knight nor any swain, nor good man that were thane, from the ports of Spain to the towns of Alemaine, that thither would not have come, if he were (had been) invited; all for Arthur's dread, of noble race. When all this folk was come; each king with his people, there men might behold, who were there beside, many a strange man, who was come to the burgh, and many kind of tidings (novelties) with Arthur the king. There was many a marvellous cloth (garment); there was many a wrath knight; there were lodgings nobly prepared; there were the inns, built with strength; there were on the fields many thousand tents; there came lard and wheat, and oats without measure; may no man say it in his tale, of the wine and of the ale; there came hay, there came grass; there came all that was good!

When all this folk was assembled by the good king, when the Whitsunday came, as the Lord it sent, then came all the bishops before their king, and the archbishops three, before Arthur; and took the crown, that was to him by right, and set upon his head with great bliss; so they gan him lead, all with God's counsel. Saint Dubrich went before—he was to Christ chosen;—the Archbishop of London walked on his right hand, and by his left side the same of York. Fifteen bishops went before, of many lands chosen; they were all clothed with garments most rich, that were all embroidered with burning gold. There walked four kings before the kaiser; they bare in their hands four swords of gold. Thus hight the one, who was a most doughty man, that was Cador the king, Arthur's darling; the second of Scotland, he bare sword in hand; and the King of North Wales and the King of South Wales.

And thus they gan lead the king to church; the bishops gan sing before the monarch, trumpets there blew; bells there rung; knights gan ride, women forth glide. In certainty it is said, and sooth it is found, that no man ever ere saw here with earthly men half so great pomp, in ever any assembly, as was with Arthur, of noble race.

Into church came Arthur the rich man; Dubrich the archbishop—the Lord was to him full good; of Rome he was legate, and prelate of the people—he sang the holy mass before the monarch. Came with the queen women fair; all wives of the rich men that dwelt in the land, and daughters of the noble men the queen had sought (or selected), all as the queen had ordered, on pain of their paying

full penalty. In the church, in the south half, sate Arthur the king himself; by the north side Wenhaver the queen. There came before her four chosen queens; each bare in the left hand a jewel of red gold, and three snow-white doves sate on their shoulders; who were the four queens, wives of the kings who bare in their hands the four swords of gold before Arthur, noblest of kings. There was many a maid-child with the noble queen; there was many a rich garment on the fair folk; there was mickle envy from land of many kind; for each weened to be better than other. Many knights anon came to the church; some for gain; some for the king; some to behold the women that were noble. Songs there were merry, that lasted very long; I ween if it had lasted seven years, the yet they would more, that were thereat. When the mass was sung, from church they thronged; the king with his folk went to his meat, with his mickle folk-joy was among the people. The queen on the other side sought her lodging; she had of women wondrous many.

When the king was set, with his men to his meat, to the king came the bishop Saint Dubrich, who was so good, and took from his head his rich crown; on account of the mickle gold the king would not it bear; and placed a less crown on the king's head; and afterwards he gan do to the queen also (likewise). In Troy this was the custom in their elders' days, of whom Brutus came, who were excellent men; all the men at their meat sate asunder by themselves, that to them seemed well done; and also the women their station had.

When the king was set with all his people to his meat, earls and barons, at the king's board, then came stepping the steward, who was named Kay, highest knight in land under the king, of all the assemblage of Arthur's folk. Kay had before him many a noble man chosen; there were a thousand bold knights wondrous well told, that served the king and his chiefs; each knight had a cloth on, and adorned with gold, and all their fingers covered with gold rings. These bare the things sent from the kitchen to the king. On the other side was Beduer, the king's high cup-bearer, with him were earls' sons of noble race born, and the noble knights' sons, who were thither come; and seven kings' sons, that with him moved. Beduer went foremost, with golden bowl; after him a thousand pressed towards the folk, with drink of all the kinds that men could think of. And the queen at her end, women most fair attended; a thousand walked before her, rich and well choice, to serve the queen, and them that were with her.

Was he never born, of any man chosen, clerk nor layman, in ever any land, that could tell it in speech of any kind, of half the wealth that was in Kaerleon, of silver and of gold, and good weeds; of high born men that dwelt among the folk; of horses, and of hawks, of hounds for deer, and of rich weeds, that were among the people. And of all the folk that dwelt there in land, the folk of this land was accounted the fairest of people, and also the women, comely in hue, and most nobly clothed, and best of all educated. For they all had in declaration, by their quick lives, that they would have their clothes of one hue. Some had white, some had red; some had eke good green; and variegated cloth of each kind was to them wondrous odious; and each ill-usage they accounted unworthy.

Then had English land the best fame of all; and this country-folk eke was dearest to the king. The high born women that dwelt in this land had all declared in their sooth words, that none would take lord (husband) in this land, never any knight, were he nought (never) so well formed, unless he were thrice tried in combat, and his courage made known, and himself approved; then might he boldly ask him a bride. For that usage the knights were brave, the women excellent, and the better behaved; then were in Britain blisses enow.

When the king had eaten, and all his people, then proceeded out of the burgh the thanes most bold; all the kings, and their chieftains; all the bishops, and all the clerks; all the earls, and all the barons; all the thanes, and all the swains, fairly clad, spread over the fields. Some they gan to ride; some they gan to race, some they gan to leap, some they gan to shoot, some they wrestled, and contest made; some they in the field played under shield; some they drove balls wide over the fields. Games of many a kind there they gan to play; and whoso might win honour of his game, men lead him with song before the sovereign, and the king for his game gave him gifts good. All the queens, that there were come, and all

the ladies, leaned over the walls, to behold the people, and the folk play. This lasted three days, such games and such plays.

Then on the fourth day, the king gan to speak, and gave his good knights all their rights; he gave silver, he gave gold; he gave horses, he gave land; castles eke and clothes; his men he pleased—there was many a bold Briton before Arthur. But now came to the king new tidings! Arthur the bold king sate at a board; before him sate kings, and many chieftains; bishops and clerks, and knights most brave.

There came into the hall marvellous tales!—there came twelve thanes bold, clad with pall; noble warriors, noble men with weapon; each had on hand a great ring of gold, and with a band of gold each had his head encircled. Ever two and two walked together; each with his hand held his companion; and glided over the floor, before Arthur, so long that they came before Arthur, the sovereign. They greeted Arthur anon with their noble words: “Hail be thou, Arthur king, darling of Britons; and hail be thy people, and all thy lordly folk! We are twelve knights come here forthright, rich and noble; we are from Rome. Hither we are come from our emperor, who is named Lucus, who ruleth Rome-people. He commanded us to proceed hither, to Arthur the king, and bade thee to be greeted with his grim words, and saith that he is astonished, wondrously much, where thou tookest the mood in this middle-earth, that thou darest of Rome oppose any doom (will), or heave up thine eyes against our ancestors; and who dared it thee to counsel, that thou art so doughty become, that thou darest threaten the lord of dooms, Lucus, the emperor, highest of men alive! Thou boldest all thy kingdom in thine own hand, and wilt not serve the emperor of the land; of the same land that Julius had in hand, who in former days won it with fight; and thou it hast retained in thy power; and with thy bold knights deprivest us of our rights. But say us, Arthur, soon, and send word to Rome; we shall thine errand bear to Lucus our emperor, if thou wilt acknowledge that he is king over thee, and if thou wilt his man become, and acknowledge him for lord, and do right to the emperor on account of Frole the king, whom thou slewest with wrong at Paris, and now holdest all his land with un-right in thy hand. If thou within these twelve weeks turn to the right, and if thou wilt of Rome any doom suffer, then mightest thou live, among thy people. And if thou wilt not do so, thou shalt receive worse, for the emperor will come here, as king shall to his own, king most keen; and take thee with strength, lead thee bound before Rome-folk;—then must thou suffer what thou erst despisedest!”

At these words the Britons leapt from the board; there was Arthur’s court exceedingly enraged; and swore mickle oath, upon our mighty Lord, that they all were (should be) dead, who this errand bare; with horses drawn in pieces, death they should suffer. There leapt towards them the Britons exceeding wrath; tore them by the hair, and laid them to the ground. There were (would have been) the Romanish men pitifully treated, if Arthur had not leapt to them, as if it were a lion; and said these words—wisest of all Britons!—“Leave ye, leave quickly these knights alive! They shall not in my court suffer any harm; they are hither ridden out of Rome, as their lord commanded them, who is named Lucus. Each man must go where his lord biddeth him go; no man ought to sentence a messenger to death, unless he were so evilly behaved, that he were traitor of his lord. But sit ye down still, knights in hall; and I will me counsel of such need, what word they shall bear to Lucus the emperor.”

Then sate all down, the folk on their benches, and the clamour ceased before the monarch. Then stood him up Arthur, noblest of kings, and he called to him seven sons of kings, earls and barons, and those that were boldest, and all the wisest men that dwelt in the folk, and went into a house that was fast inclosed, of old stone work—strong men it wrought—therein they gan to commune, his wise counsellors, what answer he would give to Lucus the emperor. When all the nobles were come to bench then was it all still that dwelt in the hall; there was great awe with the mighty king; durst there no man speak, least the king would it punish.

Then stood there up Cador, the earl most rich here, and said these words before the rich king: “I thank my Lord, who formed the daylight, to abide (have abode) this day, that is arrived to the folk, and this tiding that is come to our king; so that we need no

more lie here inert! For idleness is evil in each land; for idleness maketh man lose his manhood; idleness maketh knight lose his rights; idleness causeth many wicked crafts; idleness destroyeth many thousand men; through idle deeds little men well-speed. For long we have lain still; our honour is the less! But now I thank the Lord, who formed the daylight, that the Romanish folk are so fierce, and make their threat to come to our burghs, our king to bind, and to Rome him bring. But if it is sooth that men say, as people it tell, that the Romanish people are so fierce, and are so bold, and so mischievous, that they will now come into our land, we shall prepare for them rueful tales; their fierceness shall turn to themselves to sorrow. For never loved I long peace in my land; for through peace we are bound, and well nigh all in swoon.”

That heard Walwain, who was Arthur’s relative, and angered him much with Cador, who said these words; and thus answered Walwain the good: “Cador, thou art a powerful man; thy counsels are not good; for good is peace and good is amity, whoso freely therewith holdeth, and God himself it made, through his divinity; for peace maketh a good man work good works, for all men are the better, and the land is the merrier.”

Then heard Arthur the dispute of these knights; and thus spake the mighty man with his fierce folk: “Sit ye down quickly, my knights all, and each by his life listen my words!” All it was still that dwelt in the hall. Then spake the bold king to his noble folk: “My earls, my barons, my bold thanes, my doughty men, my dear friends; through you I have conquered under the sun, so that I am man most powerful, and fierce against my enemies; gold I have and treasure; of men I am ruler. I won it not alone, but we did, all clean. To many a fight I have led you, and ever ye were well skilled, so that many kingdoms stand in my hand. Ye are good knights, brave men and active; that I have proved in well many lands” The yet spake him Arthur, noblest of kings: “But now ye have heard, my noble thanes, what the Romanish men counsel them between, and what words they send us here, into our land, with writ and with words, and with great wrath. Now we must bethink how we may with right defend our country and our great honour, against this powerful folk, against this Rome-people, and send them answer with our good words; with much wisdom send our writ to Rome, and learn at the emperor, for what thing he us hateth; for what thing he greets us with threat and with scorn Exceeding sorely it incenseth me, and immoderately it shameth, that he reproaches us our loss that we before have lost. They say that Julius Caesar won it (Britain) with combat in fight. With strength and with fight men do many wrongs; for Caesar sought Britain with bold strength. The Britons might not against him defend their land, but with strength they went in hand, and delivered him all their land; and thereafter soon all became his men. Some of our kin they had slain, and some with horses drawn to pieces; some they led bound out of this land; and thus this land won with wrong and with sin, and now asketh by right tribute of this land! All so we may do, if we it do will, through right of Belin king, and of Brenne, his brother, the Duke of Burgundy. These were our ancestors, of whom we are come; these betray Rome, and the realm all conquered, and before Rome the strong their hostages up hung, and afterwards they took all the land, and set it in their own hand, and thou ought we with right to besiege Rome. Now will I let remain Belin and Brenne, and speak of the caiser, Constantine the strong, he was Helen’s son, all of Britons come (descended), he won Rome, and possessed the realm. Let (leave) we now of Constantine, who won Rome all to him, and speak of Maximian, who was a man most strong, he was King of Britain, he conquered France. Maximian the strong he took Rome in hand, and Alemaine (Germany) he won eke, with wondrous great strength, and all from Rome into Normandy. And all these were my ancestors, my noble progenitors; and possessed all the lands that unto Rome lay; and through such authority I ought to obtain Rome. They yearn of me in hand tribute of my land; all so will I of Rome, if I have counsel. I desire in my thoughts to possess all Rome; and he desireth in Britain to bind me most fast, and slay my Britons, with his evil attacks. But if my Lord grant it, who formed day and night, he shall sorely pay for his bold threat, and his Rome-people shall therefore perish; and I will be bold, wherein he now ruleth! Dwell ye now all still, I will say my will, no man shall do it oth-

erwise, but it shall stand thereon. He desireth all, and I desire all that we both possess; have it now and ever who may it easier win, for now we shall prove to whom God will grant it!"

Thus spake the bold king, that had Britain under his rule, that was Arthur the king, Britain's darling! His warriors sate, and to his words listened; some they sate still, a great while; some they made much communing between them; some it seemed to them good; some it disturbed their mood.

When they had long listened to the king, then spake Howel the fair, noble man of Brittany, and said these words before the fierce king: "Lord king, hearken to me, as I ere did to thee. Thou hast said sooth words may fortune be given to thee!—For it was of old said, what we now shall learn, in the years before what is now here found. Sibeli it said; her words were sooth, and set it in book, for example to folk, that three kings should go out of Britain, who should conquer Rome, and all the realm, and all the lands that thereto lie. The first was Belin, who was a British king; the other was Constantine, who was king in Britain; thou shalt be the third, that Rome shalt have. And if thou wilt it begin, thou shalt it win, and I will thereto help, with great strength, I will send over sea, to my good thanes, to my bold Britons—the better we shall proceed,—I will command all, the nobles of Britain, by their limbs and by their lives, over all my lands, that they be ready soon with thee to march to Rome. My land I will set in pledge for silver, and all the possessions of my land for silver and for gold, and so we shall proceed to Rome, and slay Lucus the emperor, and for to win thy rights, I will lead to thee ten thousand knights." Thus spake Howel, noblest of Brittany.

When that Howel had said what seemed good to him, then spake Angel the king, Scotland's darling, and stood upon a bench, and both his brothers, that was, Loth and Urien, two most noble men. Thus said Angel the king to Arthur the keen: "Lord Arthur, I say to thee through my sooth words, the same that Howel hath spoken, no man shall it avoid, but we shall perform it by our quick lives! And, lord Arthur the noble, listen to me a while, call to thee to counsel thy earls rich, and all the highest that are in thy folk, and bid them say to thee with their sooth words, in what they will help thee thy foes to destroy. I will lead to thee knights of my land, three thousand champions brave, all chosen, ten thousand men on foot, to fight most good, and go we to Rome, and conquer the realm. Full greatly it may shame us, and full greatly it may us anger, that they should send messengers after tribute to our land. But so help us the Lord that formed the daylight, they shall pay for it with their bare life! For when we have Rome, and all the realm, we shall seize the lands that thereto he, Poille (Apuha?) and Alemaine, Lumbardy and Britanny, France and Normandy—then it hight Neustrie—and so we shall tame their immoderate mood (pride)." When the king had said then answered all. "Disgraced be that man that will not help thereto, with goods and with weapons, and with all his might!"

Then was Arthur's folk sternly incensed, knights were so enraged, that all they gan to be agitated. When Arthur had heard the clamour of his folk, then gan he call—the king was angry—"Sit ye down still, knights in hall, and I will you tell what I will do. My writs I will make, that shall be well indited, and send to the emperor minds sorrow and mickle care, and I will full soon fare into Rome. I will not thither any tribute bring, but the emperor I will bind, and afterwards I will him hang; and all the land I will destroy, and all the knights put to death, that stand against me in fight!"

Arthur took his writ in hand, with hostile words, and delivered it to the men, that had brought the errand, and afterwards he caused them to be clothed with each pomp, with the noblest garments that he had in bower, and bade them fare soon to Lucus of Rome, and he would come after them as quickly as he might.

These twelve went their way toward their land; were in no land knights so bedecked with silver and with gold, nor through all things so well arrayed as these were by Arthur the king. Thus Arthur them treated, all for their words! These twelve knights proceeded until they came to Rome; they greeted their emperor, their sovereign: "Hail be thou, Lucus, thou art highest over us! We were with the fierce man, with Arthur the king, we have brought thee writs, words exceeding great Arthur is the keenest man that

we ever looked on, and he is wondrous powerful, and his thanes are bold, there is every knave as if he were knight, there is every swain as if he were rich thane, there are the knights as if it were kings, meat there is most abundant, and men most bold, and the fairest women that dwell alive; and Arthur the bold himself fairest over all! By us he sendeth word to thee, that he will come to this land, no tribute he will bring, but thyself he will bind, and afterwards he will thee hang, and this land all destroy, and take Alemaine and Lumbardy, Burgundy, France, and Normandy. And Frolle he slew, his foe, so he will to us all do, and possess himself alone the land that we own all clean, hereto he will lead kings, earls, and chieftains. And here we have in hand the writs that he thee sendeth that telleth thee what he will do, when he cometh in hither."

When the errand was said, the emperor was a full sorrowful man, and all the Rome-folk were stirred with strong wrath. Oft they went to counsel, oft they went to communing, ere to them might be determined what they would do. Nevertheless at the end a counsel they found, that was through the senator, who held the senate, the emperor they counselled that he should write letters, and send his messengers over many kingdoms, and bid them all come soon to Rome, from every land, who loved them aught, and all that willeth with fight obtain land or goods. Folk there came soon to the burgh of Rome, so mickle as there never ere any man assembled! They said that they would march over Muntgiu, and fight with Arthur, wheresoever they him found, and Arthur slay or hang, and his host all destroy, and possess for the emperor Arthur's realm.

The first king that there came, he was a man exceeding keen, Epistrod, king of Greece; Ethion, Duke of Boeotia, came with a great force; Irtac, King of Turkey; Pandras, King of Egypt; of Crete the King Ypolite; of Syria the King Evander; of Phrygia the Duke Teucer; of Babylon, Maptisas; of Spain the Caizer Meodras; of Media the King Boccus; of Libia the King Sextorius; of Bitunia, Polidices; of Ituria the King Xerxes; Ofustesar, King of Africa; was there no king his like; with him came many an African; of Ethiopia he brought the black-men. The Rome-people themselves marched them together, that were at nearest, of Rome the noblest; Marcus, Lucas, and Catel, Cocta, Gaiut, and Metel; these were the six, who the Senate all ruled.

When this folk was assembled, from lands of many kind, then caused the emperor all the host to be numbered. Then were there told right, to fight most bold, four hundred thousand knights in the heap (assemblage), with weapons and with horses, as behoveth to knights. Never was he born, in every any burgh, that might tell the folk, that there went on foot! Before harvest-day forth they gan to march, ever right the way that toward Muntgiu lay.

Let us now leave this host a while, and speak we of Arthur, noblest of kings, when that he had besought his good thanes, and each had gone home where he had land. And soon again came the knights in assemblage, with weapons well provided, through all their might, of Scotland, of Ireland, of Gutland, of Iceland, of Norway, of Denmark, of Orkney, of Man; of these same lands are a hundred thousand brave thanes, all well weaponed in their country's wise. They were not all knights, nor in this wise arrayed, but they were the keenest men that any man knew, with great battle-axes, and with long saexes. Of Normandy, of Anjou, of Britain, of Poitou, of Flanders, of Boulogne, of Lorraine, of Lovaine, came a hundred thousand to the king's host, knights with the best, completely provided with weapons. There came the twelve companions that France should obey; twelve thousand knights they brought forthright; and of this land Arthur took in hand fifty thousand knights, keen and brave men in battle. Howel of Brittany led ten thousand of his land-folk, knights with the best. Of footmen; when they forth marched, through no kind of speech could any man them number!

Arthur then ordered, noblest of kings, the folk to be assembled at a set time, by their bare life, at Barbefleote; and there he would gather his good people. This land he delivered to a famous knight; he was Walwain's brother, there was no other; he was named Modred, wickedest of men; truth he had none to ever any man; he was Arthur's relation, of his noble race; but knight he was wondrous good, and he had very much pride; he was Arthur's

sister's son; to the queen was his resort—that was evilly done-to his uncle he did treachery. But it was all secret, in host and in hall, for no man it weened, that it should be, but men in sooth weened him, because Walwain was his brother, the truest man of all that came to the folk; through Walwain was Modred by men the more beloved, and Arthur the keen full well was pleased with him. He took all his kingdom, and set it to Modred in hand, and Wenhaver, his queen, worthiest of women, that then in this nation dwelt in land. Arthur gave to them all that he possessed, to Modred and the queen—that to them was pleasing. That was evilly done, that they were (should have been) born; this land they destroyed with numerous sorrows; and themselves at the end the Worse gan disgrace (or destroy), so that they there lost their lives and their souls, and ever afterwards became odious in every land, so that never any man would offer a good prayer for their souls, on account of the treachery that he did to Arthur, his uncle. All that Arthur possessed he gave to Modred, his land and his people, and his dear queen; and afterwards he took his army of folk most fair, and marched full soon toward Southampton.

There came numerous ships soon sailing over the wide sea, to the king's folk; the king distributed the folk over the long ships; by thousands and by thousands to the ships they thronged; the father wept on the son, sister on the brother; mother on the daughter, when the host departed. The weather stood at will, the wind waxed in hand; and anchors they up drew, joy was among the folk. The thanes wondrous blithe wound their way into the wide sea, the ships thereforth pressed, the glee-men there sung; sails there they hoist, ropes there they right; weather they had softest of all, and the sea slept. For the softness (calm) Arthur gan to sleep; as the king slept a dream he dreamt; marvellous was the dream, the king it alarmed!

When the king him awoke, greatly he was frightened, and began to groan with loud voice. Was there none so bold knight under Christ, who durst ask the king of his welfare, ere the king himself spake, and discoursed with his barons there, and thus Arthur him said, when he awoke from his sleep: "Lord governor Christ, ruler of dooms, protector of middle-earth, comforter of men through thy merciful will, ruler of angels; let thou my dream turn to good!" Then spake Angel the king, Scotland's darling: "Lord, say us thy dream, for prosperity is given to us" "Blithely," quoth the king, "to bliss may it turn! Where I lay in slumber, and I gan for to sleep, methought that in the welkin came a marvellous beast, eastward in the sky, and loathsome to the sight; with lightning and with storm sternly he advanced; there is in no land any bear so loathly. Then came there westward, winding with the clouds, a burning dragon; burghs he swallowed, with his fire he lighted all this land's realm; methought in my sight that the sea gan to burn of light and of fire, that the dragon carried. This dragon and the bear, both together, quickly soon together they came; they smote them together with fierce assaults, flames flew from their eyes as firebrands! Oft was the dragon above, and eftsoons beneath; nevertheless at the end high he gan rise, and he flew down right with fierce assault, and the bear he smote, so that he fell to the earth; and he there the bear slew, and limmeal him tore. When the fight was done, the dragon back went. This dream I dreamt, where I lay and slept."

The bishops heard this, and book-learned men; this heard earls, this heard barons; each by his wit said wisdom, and this dream they interpreted, as to them best seemed. There durst no knight to evil expound no whit, lest he should lose his limbs that were dear to him. Forth they gan to voyage exceeding quickly; the wind stood to them at will, weather best of all; they had all that to them was need; to land they came at Barbefleot. To Barbefleot, at Constantin, therein came a mickle multitude, from all the lands that Arthur had in hand. So soon as they might, out of ship they moved, the king ordered his folk to seek lodging, and the king would rest, until his folk came. He was not there but one night, that a fair knight came to him; he told tiding to Arthur the king, he said that there was arrived a monster, westward from Spain; a fiend well loathsome; and in Britanny was busy to harm. By the seaside the land he wasted wide—now it hight Mount Saint Michel—the land he possesseth every part.—"Lord king," quoth the knight, "in sooth I make known to thee right here, he hath

taken away thy relative, with great strength, a nobly born woman, Howel's daughter choice, who was named Helen, noblest of maidens. To the mount he carried her, noblest of maidens; now full a fortnight the fiend hath holden her there right; we know not in life whether he have her not to wife. All the men that he seizeth, he maketh to him for meat, cattle, horses, and the sheep, goats, and the swine eke; all this land he will destroy, unless thou allay our care, the land and this people; in thee is our need." Yet said the knight to the monarch: "Seest thou, lord, the mount, and the great wood, wherein the fiend dwelleth that destroyeth this people? We have fought with him well many times; by sea and by land this folk he destroyed; our ships he sank, the folk he all drowned, those that fought on the land, those he down laid. We have driven (suffered) that so long, that we let him alone, to act how so he will, after his will, the knights of this land dare not with him any more fight."

Arthur heard this, noblest of all kings; he called to him the Earl Kay, who was his steward and his relative; Beduer eke to him he called, he who was the king's cup-bearer. He bade them forthright be all ready at midnight, with all their weapons, to go with the king, so that no man under Christ should know of their journey, except Arthur the king, and the two knights with him, and their six swains, brave men and active; and the knight that counselled it to the king should lead them. At the midnight, when men were asleep, Arthur forth him went, noblest of all kings. Before rode their guide, until it was daylight; they alighted from their steeds, and righted their weeds. Then saw they not far a great fire smoke, upon a hill, surrounded by the sea-flood; and another hill there was most high; the sea by it flowed full nigh, thereupon they saw a fire that was mickle and most strong. The knights then doubted, to whether of the two they might go, that the giant were not aware of the king's movement. Then Arthur the bold took him to counsel, that they should go together near the one fire; and if they there him found, kill him to death. Forth went the king, so that he came near; nought he there found but a mickle fire there burning. Arthur went about, and his knights by his side; nought they found alive upon earth but the great fire, and bones innumerable; by estimation it seemed to them thirty fother. Arthur then knew not any good counsel, and began him to speak to Beduer, his earl:—"Beduer, go quickly down from this hill, and pass thee over the deep water, with all thy weeds; and with wisdom advance to the fire; and go thou aside, and behold diligently, if thou mayest find ought of the fiend. And if thou mayest him perceive, in wise of any kind, go down still, until thou come to the water, and say me there soon what thou hast seen. And if it so befalleth, that thou come to the fire, and the fiend thee perceive, and proceed toward thee, have my good horn, that all with gold is adorned, and blow it with strength, as man shall for need. And advance thee to the fiend, and begin to fight, and we shall come to thee, as most quickly we may do it. And if thou findest him near the fire and thou all unperceived back mayest go; then forbid I thee, by thy bare life, that thou ever with the monster begin fight."

Beduer heard what his lord said to him; his weapons he put him on, and forth he went, and ascended up the mount that was immense. He bare in his hand a spear exceeding strong; a shield on his back, ornamented all with gold; a helm on his head, high, of steel; his body was covered with a fair burny; he had by his side a brand all of steel; and forth he gan step, the powerfully strong earl, until he arrived near the fire; and he under a tree gan him tarry. Then heard he one weep, wondrously much, weep and whine with piteous cries. Then the knight weened that it were the giant, and he became incensed as if it were a wild boar, and soon forgot what his lord said to him. His shield he drew on his breast, his spear he grasped fast, and near gan wend toward the fire; he thought to find the stern fiend, that he might fight, and prove himself. Then found he there a woman shaking with her head, a hoary-locked wife, who wept for her wretchedness; she cursed her lot that she was alive; that sate by the fire, with piteous cries, and sat and ever she beheld a grave, and said her words with plaintive voice: "Alas! Helen; alas! dear maid; alas! that I thee fed, that I thee fostered; alas! that the monster hath thee here thus destroyed; alas! that I was born; my limbs he hath broken in pieces!"

Then looked the woman about, where the giant should arrive;

and looked on the Earl Beduer, who was come there. Then said the woman hoar, where she sate by the fire: "What are thou, fair wight? art thou angel, art thou knight? are thy wings hung with gold? If thou art from heaven, thou mayest in safety go hence, and if thou art earthly knight, harm thou wilt have forth-right. For now anon cometh the monster that all thy limbs will draw in pieces; though thou wert all steel, he would thee destroy, every bit. He went to Britanny, to the best of all mansions, to Howel's castle, noble man in Britanny; the gates he all brake in pieces, and within he gan wend. He took the hall wall, and pulled it to ground; the chamber's door he cast down, so that it burst in five; he found in the chamber the fairest of all maids; Helen she was named, of noble race; Howel's daughter, noble man of Britanny, Arthur's relative of most noble lineage. I was her foster-mother, and fair her fostered. There the giant took us forth with himself, fifteen miles, into this wild wood, hither to this same place; thus he us treated to-day a sen'night. So soon as he hither came, so he took the maid; he would have carnal intercourse with the maiden. Age had she no more but fifteen years; the maiden might not endure his force; anon so he lay with her, her life she lost soon! And here he her buried, fairest of all maids, Helen, mine own foster, Howel's daughter! When he had this done, so myself he took; on the ground he me laid, and lay with myself. Now hath he all my bones loathsomely broken; my limbs all dismembered; my life to me is odious! Now I have thee told, how we are led here. Flee now quickly, least he thee find; for if he cometh enraged, with his direful onsets, was he never born that may stand thee before!"

Even with these words that the woman said, Beduer gan to comfort her with fair words: "Dear mother, I am a man, and knight am brave; and I will say thee through my sooth words, that no champion was born of ever any lady, that man may not with strength stoop him to ground; and serve thee an old woman—very little are thy powers. But have now very goodday, and I will go my way."

Down went him Beduer to his sovereign, and told him how he had care, and all how he had fared, and what the old woman told him of the maiden, and how the giant each day by the old woman lay. There they them between held their communing, how they might take on, so that the fiend were destroyed.

The while arrived the giant, and proceeded to his fire; he bare upon his back a great burthen, that was twelve swine, tied together, with withies exceeding great wreathed altogether. Adown he threw the dead swine, and himself sate thereby; his fire he gan mend, and great trees laid thereon; the six swine he drew in pieces, and ever he to the woman smiled, and soon by a while he lay by the woman. But he knew not of the tiding that came to his leman. He drew out his embers; his flesh he gan to roast; and all the six swine he gan eat ere he arose from his seat, all besmeared in the ashes—evil were the viands; and afterwards he gan to roar, and vociferated much, and down lay by the fire, and stretched his limbs.

Let we now the giant be, and go to the king. Arthur at the water took his weapons in hand, and the Earl Beduer, good knight, wise and wary; and the third was Kay, the king's steward and his relative. Over the water they came, weaponed with the best, and ascended up the hill with all their strength, until they arrived near the fire, where the giant lay and slept, and the woman sate and wept. Arthur drew him beside and spake to his companions; forbade them by their limbs and by their bare life, that none were so keen that they should come near, unless they saw that it were need. Beduer tarried him there, and Kay, his companion.

Arthur gan step forth, sturdy-mooded warrior, until he came to the floor, where the fiend lay and slept. Ever was Arthur void of fear; that was manifest therein, wondrous though it seem; for Arthur might there have hewed the giant in pieces, slain the monster where he lay and slept; then would not Arthur no whit touch him in his sleep, lest he in future days should hear upbraiding. Then called Arthur anon, noblest of kings: "Arise, fiend-monster, to thy destruction! Now we shall avenge the death of my relative!"

Ere the king had this fully said, the giant up started, and grasped his mickle club, and weened with the blow to dash Arthur all in pieces; but Arthur drew his shield high above his helm; and the giant smote thereon above, so that all it gan to shiver. And

Arthur struck at him in haste with his sword, and smote off him the chin, with all the hair; and started him behind a tree, that there stood near; and the giant smote after quickly, and hit him not, but he smote the tree, so that his club brake all in pieces. And Arthur quickly ran round about the tree; and so Arthur and the monster ran round it thrice about. Then was the giant exceeding heavy, and Arthur was the swifter, and overtook the giant, and up heaved his good brand, and smote from him the thigh; and the giant down fell.

And Arthur stopt and beheld; then gan the fiend to speak: "Lord, lord, give me peace; who is it that fighteth with me? I weened not that any man in this world's realm might me thus lightly defeat in fight, except it were Arthur, noblest of all kings; and nevertheless was I never of Arthur sore afraid." Then said Arthur to him, noblest of kings: "I am Arthur the king, Britain's darling. Tell me of thy race, and where is their habitation; and who should be to thee father or mother accounted on earth; and from what land thou art hither arrived; and why thou hast destroyed with murder my relative?" Then answered the fiend, where he lay and beheld: "All this I will do, and thy troth receive, on condition that thou let me live, and heal my limbs." Arthur him wrathed, wondrously much; and he called Beduer, his bold champion: "Go near, Beduer, and take off from him here the head; and carry it forth with thee, down from this mount." Beduer came near, and deprived him of his head; and so they proceeded thence down to their companions. Then sate the king down, and gan him rest; and said these words Arthur the good: "Never fought I any such fight, upon this land, but when I slew the King Riun, upon the mount of Ravin!"

Afterwards they forth went, and came to the host; when that they the head saw, wondrous it seemed to them, wherever under heaven were such head begotten! Howel of Britanny came to the king, and the king said to him all of the maiden. Then was Howel sorry, and sorrowful therefore in heart; and took all his companions, and fared to the mount where the British maid lay buried in earth. He caused there to be areared soon a church most fair, in Saint Mary's name, the Lord's mother; and afterwards he gave a name to the hill, ere he thence departed, and named it Helen's Tomb,—now it hight Mount Saint Michel.

Then was Arthur's host numerously collected; from Ireland, from Scotland, thither were they come. Then caused the king the trumpets to be blown in the host, and marched from Britain, busy men and keen, throughout Normandy, that then hight Neustrie. They proceeded throughout France, and the folk marched after them; they went out of France into Burgundy. His spies there came, and held his companions; and made known to the king, there in the country, that Luces the emperor, and all his Romanish host, thitherward they came, out of their land, and so they would march in toward France; and all the land conquer; and afterwards proceed hither, and kill all the Britons, quick that they found, and Arthur the keen led bound to France. Then was enraged the bold-est of all kings, and ordered all his tents to be pitched in the fields; and there he would abide until he the sooth knew, where he might the emperor certainly intercept (or hostilely engage). The water hight Albe, where the bold king lay. A wise knight there came riding to the king's host, who was all wounded, and his folk greatly felled; the Romanish men had bereaved him of all his land. He told to the king new tiding, where the emperor lay, and all his Romanish army, and where he might him find, if he him would with him fight, or make peace with the Romanish men. "But, lord Arthur," quoth the knight, "I will shew to thee here right, that better for thee is it to have friendship, than for to fight; for against thy two they have twelve; so many kings, so many chieftains! He is in no land who may it make known to thee, for all the folk, that followeth the emperor, without (besides) the Rome-people, of his own territory, and without the folk that yearn the king's favour."

When the tales were all told, and Arthur had them understood, then called the king forth-right his dearest knights, and they counselled them between a castle to arear, beside the water that Albe was named. On a spot exceeding fair it was built full soon, there helped many a hand, in haste was it done; for if Arthur mis-fared, when he came to the fight, or his folk fell, or set to flight, then thought he to remain in the strong castle. Then called he earls

twain, noble men and wise; high men born, to the king exceeding dear; the one was of Chartres, and hight Gerin—much wisdom dwelt with him; the other hight Beof of Oxford—well wide sprang the earl's fame. The yet the king called Walwain, who was his dearest relative; for Walwain understood Romanish; Walwain understood British; he was nurtured in Rome well many winters. The king took these three knights fair, and to the emperor them sent, and bade him with his army go back to Rome, and that he never into France his host should lead. "And if thou thither marchest, and leadeest thine host, thou shalt be received to thy destruction! For France is mine own land, and I won it with fight; and if thou wilt not relinquish, that thou wilt not hither come, go we two to the fight, and fall the worst; and let we the poor folk dwell in quiet. For whilom the Rome-people conquered all the land, and afterwards they losed the land with fight; and I with fight it won, and with fight will hold."

Forth the knights went, goodly champions; that was, Gerin, and Beof the fair, and Walwain the bold, cuirassed and helmeted on their noble steeds; and each carried on his shoulder a shield exceeding good; they bare in their hands spears most strong. Forth they gan ride, noble men, from the host; much of the folk that with Arthur dwelt, with Walwain went, and earnestly prayed him, that he should raise some dispute with the Rome-folk:—"That we may with fight prove ourselves; for it is many years that (since) their threats came here; and their menace they make, that they will us behead. Now is it much folk-shame, if it thus shall alay, unless there be some strife ere we become reconciled; shafts broken in pieces, burnies torn, shields shivered, warriors hewed, and swords bathed in the red blood." Forth the earls proceeded through a great wood, and marked a way that over a mount lay, so that they came soon to the folk of Rome; worthily weaponed they rode on their horses. There men might behold, the man who were beside, many thousands throng out of the tents, all to behold these three bold knights, and beheld their steeds, and beheld their weeds, and hearkened tidings from Arthur the king. And next forthright questioned the knights, and if the king had sent them to the emperor, for to speak with the emperor, and to yearn his peace. But for never any speech these three noble earls would abide, ere they came riding before the tent's door, wherein was the emperor. Down they gan alight, and delivered their steeds; and so they weaponed with all advanced into the tent, before the emperor that Lucus was named. Where he sate on his bed their errand they to him made known; each said his say as to him seemed best, and bade him go back to his land, so that he never more with hostility should seek France. The while that these three earls said their errand, the emperor sate as if he were dumb, and answer never any gave to these earls; but he listened eagerly, wicked in his thought. Then Walwain became angry, as athane enraged; and said these words Walwain the keen: "Lucus the mighty, thou art emperor of Rome! We are Arthur's men, noblest of Britons. He sendeth to thee his messengers, without greeting; he bids thee march to Rome, that is thine own realm, and let him hold France, that he won with fight; and hold thou thy realm, and thy Rome-folk. Whilom thy ancestors invaded France; with fight they there won immense possessions; so awhile they there lived, and afterwards they it lost. With fight Arthur it won, and he it will possess. He is our lord, we are his warriors; he ordered us to say sooth to thyself, if thou wilt not back march, thy bane he will be. And if thou wilt not back turn, but execute thy will, and thou wilt win the kingdom to thine own hand, now to-morrow is the day, have it if thou it may obtain"

Then answered the emperor, with great wrath: "I will not back march, but France I will win; my ancestors it held, and I will it have. But if he would become my man, and acknowledge me for lord, and truly serve me, and hold me for master, I will make peace with him, and all his men; and let him hold Britain, that Julius had awhile in his hand, and many other lands, that Julius had in hand, that he hath no right to, though he possess the realm, that he shall all lose, unless he make peace."

Then answered Walwain, who was Arthur's relative: "Belin and Brenne, both the brothers, Britain they possessed, and France they conquered; and afterwards they marched soon, and won Rome, and there they dwelt afterwards well many years. When

this was all done, then was Brenne emperor, and ruled Rome, and all the people. And thus is Rome our right, that thou holdest in hand, and if we may live, we will it have, unless thou wilt acknowledge that Arthur is king over thee, and each year send him tribute of thy land; and if thou goest to him in amity, thou mayest live the quieter!"

Then sate by the emperor a knight of his kin, named Quencelin; noble man in Rome. This knight answered before the emperor, and thus him said—the knight was wicked:—"Knights, return you back, and make known to your king, that the Britons are bold, but they are accounted worthless; for ever they make boast—their honour is little!" More he thought to say, when Walwain drew his sword, and smote him upon the head, so that it fell in two, and he hastily anon ran to his horse; and they up leapt with grim countenance; and these words said Walwain the good: "So help me the same Lord, that formed the daylight, if ever any of your men is so keen, that after us he pursue, I will him kill, he shall be cut in pieces with my broad sword!" Even with the same speech then called the emperor: "Hold them! hold! They all shall hang upon high trees, or with horses be drawn in pieces!" Even with this saying that the emperor said, the earls gan to ride, and spurred their steeds; they shook in their hands spears exceeding long; bare their broad shields before breast. Soon gan to ride the bold earls, and ever the emperor loud gan to call: "Seize them! slay them! They have us disgraced!" There men might hear, who were there beside, thousands of the people call: "Hither, hither, weapons! Go we after them! Hither our shields; the men will escape!" Soon after them went weaponed warriors; there six, there seven, there eight, there nine. And ever the earls rode quickly, and ever awhile looked behind them; and ever the knights of Rome quick after came.

And there came near a knight, riding swiftest of all, and ever he called most keenly: "Turn again, knights, and defend you with fight! It is to you much shame, that ye will fly." Walwain knew the shout of the Romanish men; he turned his steed, and to him gan ride; and smote him through with the spear, as if he were spitted, and drew to him the spear—the man died soon—and these words said Walwain the keen: "Knight, thou rodest too fast; better were it to thee (haddest thou been) at Rome!" Marcel hight the knight, of noble lineage. When Walwain saw that he fell to ground, soon his sword he out drew, and smote from Marcel the head; and these words said Walwain the good: "Marcel, go to hell, and there tell them tales, and dwell there for ever, with Quencelin, thy companion; and hold there your communing,—better it were to you in Rome; for thus we shall teach you our British speech!"

Gerin saw how it fared, how that the Romanish lay there down; and spurred his horse, and met another, and smote him throughout with his spear, and these words spake: "Ride now so, Roman, and sink thee to hell, and thus we shall sink you, if God will us help! Threat is worth nought, unless there be deeds eke!" Beof saw, the brave man, how his comrades had done; and turned his horse wondrously quick, and with all his might advanced to a knight, and smote him above the shield, so that his good burny burst, and throughout the neck the spear drove full soon. And thus the earl gan to call keenly to his companions: "The Britons will us destroy, if we hence go, unless we the better begin ere we hence depart!" Even with the speech that the earl said, they turned them soon, wondrously prompt; and each drew his sword quickly, and each slew his Roman; and afterwards their horses they turned, and held their way. And the Romanish men rode ever after them; oft they smote on them, oft they them reproached; oft they said to them: "Ye shall pay for the deed!" but they might not through anything any of them down bring, nor any harm there do to them in the conflicts. But ever awhile the earls back turned, and ere they separated, the worse was to the Rome-folk.

Thus they proceeded fifteen miles, until they came to a place under a fair wood, hard by the castle where Arthur lay fast. Three miles therefrom to the wood thronged nine thousand bold Britons, whom Arthur thither sent, who best knew the land; they would learn the sooth, of Walwain the keen, and of his companions, how they had fared; whether they were alive, or they lay by the way. These knights proceeded through the wood wondrously still, upon a hill, and eagerly beheld. They caused all the horsemen

to alight in the wood, and get ready their weapons, and all their weeds (garments), except an hundred men, that there should look out, if they might descry through thing of any kind. Then saw they afar, in a great plain, three knights ride with all their main. After the three knights there came thirty; after the thirty they saw three thousand; thereafter came thronging thirty thousand anon, of Romanish folk, clad in armour. And ever the earls before them quickly rode, ever the right way that toward the wood lay, where their comrades were well hid. The earls rode to the wood; the Romanish men rode after; the Britons attacked them on their rested steeds, and smote in front, and felled an hundred anon. Then weened the Rome-folk that Arthur came riding, and were very greatly afraid; and the Britons pursued after them, and slew of the folk fifteen hundred. Then came them to help sixteen thousand of their own folk, whom Arthur had thither sent, bold Britons, with burnies clad.

Then came there riding one that was a rich earl, named Petreius, a noble man of Rome, with six thousand warriors, to help the Romanish forces; and with great strength they leapt to the Britons, and few there they captured, but many they slew. The Britons fled to the wood; the others pursued after them; and the Britons on foot firmly against them stood, and the Romanish men fought riding; and the Britons advanced to them, and slew their horses, and many there took, and into the wood drew. Then was Petreius wrath, that his force was there the worse; and he with his host retreated from the wood; and the Britons followed them, and slew them behind. When the Britons were out of the wood, come out in the field, then withstood the Rome-folk with fierce strength. Then began the mickle fight; there fell earls and many a good knight; there fell in that day fifteen thousand of noble men, ere it were even. There might he find, whoso would prove his strength, hand against hand, the strong against the strong, shield against shield, knights there fell! The paths ran with bloody streams; goldcoloured shields lay over the fields; all the day long they held the strong fight. Petreius on this side his folk held together; then it soon happened that the Britons had the worse. The noble Earl of Oxford, who was named Beof, a noble British man, saw that, that in no wise might it be, that the Britons should not fall, unless they had counsel. The earl then called to him noble knights, of the best of all, the Britons, and of the keenest of all, that there were alive, and drew him in the field, near the host; and thus him saidin heart to him was uneasiness: "Knights, hearken now to me; the Lord us help! We are hither come, and have undertaken this fight, without Arthur's counsel who is our chief. If to us good befalleth, we shall please him the better, and if to us be-falleth evil, he will hate us. But if ye will do my counsel, then shall we ride all merry. We are three hundred knights, helmed thanes, brave men and keen, nobly born; shew ye your courage—we are of one kith—ride ye when I ride, and follow my counsel. Advance ye all to him, to the knight that I do; take ye no steed, nor any knight's weed, but every good knight slay ever downright!"

Even with the words that the knight of Oxford said to his companions beside, then gan he to ride, even all they rode then as swift as hound driveth the hart, and his comrades after, with all their might, throughout the mickle fight, all the troop; they flew on their steeds; the folk they there killed. Woe was to them born, that were in the way before them, for all they it trod down, with horses and with steeds; and so they came near, and Petreius they captured. Beof rode to him, and with arms him clasped, and drew him off his steed, and on earth him stretched; he knew beside him were his bold knights. The Britons down smote; Petreius they drew along; and the Rome-folk fought boldly; and at the last man might not know who smote other; there was much blood shed, mischief was in the conflict! Then saw Walwain truly, where he was beside; with seven hundred knights he gan thither move, and what he found in his way, all he it destroyed. And riding he took Petreius, on his good steed; and led forth Petreius, loath though it were to him, until they came to the wood, where he well knew surely to hold the noble man of Rome; and eft out in the field proceeded, and began to fight. There men might see sorrow enough! shields break; knights fall; helms dropping; noble men dying; bloody fields; pale faces! The Britons rushed towards them; then the Rome-folk fled; and the Britons them slew,

and many they took alive; and when the day ended woe was to the Rome-folk, woe! Then bound men fast the Romanish knights, and led them to the wood, before Walwain; twenty hundred knights watched them in the night.

When it was day on the morrow, the folk gan to stir; forth they gan march to their sovereign, and brought him such offering, that was lief to him to have. Then spake him Arthur thus: "Welcome, Petreius! Now is one here that will teach thee British speech. Thou boasted before the emperor, that thou wouldest me kill; take all my castles, and my kingdom; and much good should be to thee of that thou desiredst to have. I will give thee, full truly, my castle in Paris; and there thou shalt dwell, as to thee will be most loathsome of all; shalt thou nevermore thy life thence lead!" Arthur took the knights that there were captured, three hundred riders he took eke anon, who all were comrades, knights most brave, and keen men in fight, and bade them on the morrow manly arise, bind the Romanish men with strong chains, and lead Petreius to the burgh of Pans. Four earls he commanded to bring them forth; Cadour, Borel, Beduer, and Richer; he ordered them to be companions, so that they were secure, and to come again soon to their sovereign.

This was all thus spoken, but it was soon known. Spies went over the king's host, and heard say sooth words, whither Arthur would send the knights that he had in bonds; and the spies forthright proceeded forth by night, until they came soon to the emperor of Rome, and told all their tale, how these four earls should march, and lead forth Petreius to the burgh of Paris; and all they told the way that in to Paris lay, and where men might them intercept in a deep valley, and take from them Petreius the noble man, and the four earls conquer, and fast them bind. Lucus heard this, the emperor of Rome, and he leapt to weapon as it were a lion; and ordered ten thousand chosen knights to horse and to arms, quickly forwards to march. He called Sextonus, of Lybia he was king, of Turkey duke; he sent after Evander, who from Babylon was come there; he called to the senators Bal, Catel, and Carnus,—these were all of royal birth, and these were all chosen,—promptly to ride, and to liberate Petreius.

Anon as it was even forth they marched; twelve knights them led of the people that were exceeding wary, and knew the ways. When the Rome-folk rode, resounded burnies; they set on their heads high helms; shields on their backs—the valiant Rome-folk. They marched all night, exceedingly fast, until they came in the way that into Paris lay; then were they before, and the Britons behind. But alas! that Cadour the keen knew it not, that the Rome-folk had before rode them! They came in a wood, in a spot exceeding fair, in a deep dale, dark on the sides; they swore between them, that there they would engage. There they lay still a little while; and it gan to dawn, and the beasts gan to stir. Then came Arthur's men advancing by way, right the same way where the other host lay; they rode singithe men were blithe! Nevertheless Cadour was there, most wise and most wary; he and Borel the earl rich, advanced them together, and took between them five hundred knights, and marched before, weaponed champions. Richer and Beduer came behind them there, and led the knights, whom they had captured, Petreius and his companions, who were taken. Then came they riding upon the Rome-folk; and the Rome-folk rushed towards them with fierce strength, and smote on the Britons with exceeding bitter blows; brake the Britons' ranks—mischief was among the folk—the wood gan resound, warriors there fell! The Britons withstood them, and strongly defended themselves. Richer heard that, and the earl Beduer, how their comrades before them fought. Petreius they took, and all their prisoners, and with three hundred swains sent them into the wood. And they themselves advanced toward their comrades, and smote on the Rome-folk with fierce strength; there was many a blow given, and many a man there was slain. Then perceived Evander, who was a heathen king most wary, that their folk gan wax, and the Britons gan wane; and his best knights approached them together, and advanced upon the Britons, as if they would them bite. The Britons then were weakened, and theirs was the worse; they (the Romans) slew, they took all that they came nigh.

Woe was there to the Britons without Arthur! Their remedy was too little there, at their great need. There was Borel slam, and

deprived of life-day. Evander the king him killed with his wicked craft, and three Britons eke, high men born. There were slain three hundred of their companions; and many they took alive, and fast them bound;—then knew they not any good counsel, for they all weened to be dead; nevertheless they fought as bravely as they might.

Then had out marched from Arthur's host the king of Poitou, hardy man renowned; Guitard he hight; Gascony he possessed; he had for companions five hundred riders, three hundred archers, keen men to fight, and seven hundred on foot that were prompt for harm. They were gone in to the land to obtain fodder, both fodder and meat, to carry to their host. The clamour they heard of the Rome-folk, their deeds they relinquished, and thitherward gan ride the strong minded men and swift, of sloth devoid, until they came soon near to the fight. Guitard and his knights there right forthright grasped their shields, knights most bold; and all the archers pressed them beside; and the men on foot gan advance; and all together they on smote, with their smart blows. At the first onset the Romanish men fell; fifteen hundred to the ground; there was slain Evander, who was ere king full stern; Catellus of Rome forgot there his decrees! Then made they there flight, who ere held conflict; the Rome-folk turned the backs, and fled. The Britons pursued after them, and greeted them with mischief; and so many there they took, and so many there they slew, that the Britons' host might not fell any more! And the Romanish men, that there might escape, rode full soon to the emperor, and told him tiding of Arthur the king,—for they weened in sooth that Arthur thither were come; then was the emperor and his host greatly afraid, whom the Britons had slain—that to them seemed good. Backward they (the Britons) then went, with bold booty, and came again to the place where the fight had been, and buried the dead, and the alive they gan forth lead. And they sent after Petreius, whom they previously captured, and after his companions, that were previously taken, and sent them all full truly in to the burgh of Paris, and filled three castles, and fast them inclosed, after Arthur's command, noblest of all kings. All the Britons loved Arthur; to all of them stood dread of him that dwelt in the land, so did it to the emperor, of Arthur he had mickle care; and all the Rome-folk of Arthur were afraid.

Then was it in sooth found, what Merlin whilom said, that Rome should for Arthur fall in fire, and the walls of stone quake and fall. This same token should be of Lucus the emperor, and of the senators, who with him came from Rome; and in the same wise, they there gan fall; what Merlin in fore-days said, all they it found there, as they did ere, and subsequently well everywhere; ere Arthur were born, Merlin it all predicted.

The emperor heard say sooth words, how his men were taken, and how his folk was eke slain. Then were in his army manifold sorrows; some lamented their friends; some threatened their enemies; some got ready their weapons—mischief was given to them! Then saw Lucus, that evil was befallen to him, for each day he lost of his people, but he the harm felt, his noble men he lost. He became then afraid wondrously much, and betook him to counsel and to some communing, that he would march to Aust, with all his host; forth by Lengres he would proceed,—of Arthur he had mickle care!

Arthur had his spies in the army of the emperor, and they soon caused him to know whither he (the emperor) would go. Arthur caused soon his host to be assembled, stilly by night his best knights; and forth the king marched with his good folk. On his right hand he let Lengres stand, and proceeded forward in the way that Lucus would pass. When he came in a dale, under a down, there he gan halt, keenest of all kings,—the dale is in sooth named Sosie. Arthur there alighted down, and ordered all his people that they in haste should get ready their weapons, and prepare them to fight, as brave knights should; so that when the Rome folk there should come riding, that they should attack them, as brave knights should do. All the swains, and the impotent thanes, and of the small (base) folk many thousands, the king set them on a hill, with many standards,—that he did for stratagem; thereof he thought to boast, as it afterwards happened, thereafter full soon. Arthur took ten thousand of his noble knights, and sent on the right hand, clad in armour, he caused other ten thousand to march

on his left hand; ten thousand before; ten thousand behind, with himself he held sixteen thousand; aside he sent into a fair wood seventeen thousand good knights, well weaponed men, the wood to guard, so that they might fare thither, if to him were need. Then was of Gloucester an earl with the best, Moruith he was named, a man exceeding keen; to him he committed the wood and the host. "And if it befallleth, as the living God will, that they be overcome, and begin to flee; pursue ye after them, with all your might, and all that ye may overtake deprive it of life-day; the fat and the lean, the rich and the poor. For in never any land, nor in any nation are knights all so good as are with myself, knights all so brave, knights all so powerful, knights all so strong, in ever any land! Ye are under Christ knights keenest of all, and I am mightiest of all kings under God himself. Do we well this deed, God us well speed!" The knights then answered, stilly under heaven: "All we shall well do, and all we shall undertake; nothing be the knight, that sheweth not his might here right!" Then sent they on both sides, all the men on foot; then caused he the Dragon to be set up, the matchless standard, delivered it to a king who well could it hold. Angel, King of Scotland, held in hand (commanded) the foremost troop; Cador, the Earl of Cornwall, held the troop behind; Beof had one, the Earl of Oxford; the Earl of Chester, Gerin, the fourth troop held with him. The force upon the down held AEscil, King of Denmark. Lot held the one, who was dear to the king. Howel of Britanny held another. Walwain the keen was by the king. Kay commanded one, who was steward of the king; Beduer another, who was the king's cup-bearer. The Earl of Flanders, Howeldin, had a troop with him. A mickle troop had Gwitard, the King of Gascony land. Wigein, Earl of Leicester, and Jonathas, Earl of Dorchester, they commanded the two troops that there were on foot. The Earl of Chester, Cursaleyn, and the Earl of Bath, who hight Urgein, they commanded both the troops that were there beside; these should on two sides advance to the fight, with these two earls, that brave knights were,—Arthur had troth the earls were true. When all the troops were set as Arthur thought good, then called to him the King of Britain all his councillors, that were skilfullest in judgment; and thus said Arthur anon to his noble men: "Hearken now towards me, my dear friends; ye have twice attacked the Romanish men, and twice they are overcome, and slain, and captured, because they all with wrong covet our land. And my heart saith to me, through our high Lord, that yet they shall be overcome, both slain and captured. Ye have overcome Norwegians; ye have overcome Danes, Scotland and Ireland ye have all won to your hand; Normandy and France ye have conquered with fight. Three and thirty kingdoms I hold in mine own hand, that ye have won for me under the sun! And these are the worst men of all men alive; heathen people! To God they are loathsome; our Lord they desert, and to Mahoun they draw. And Lucus, the emperor, of God's self hath no care, who hath for companions heathen hounds, God's enemies; we shall them destroy, and lay them to ground, and ourselves be safe, with the Lord's will, that ruleth all deeds!" Then answered the earls there: "All we are ready, to live and to lie with our dear king!"

When this army was all prepared, then was it daylight; and Lucus at Langres moved, and all his Rome-folk; he commanded his men to blow his golden trumpets, get ready his host, for forth he would march from Lengres to Aust, as his way right lay. And forth gan ride the Romanish people, until they came a mile near to Arthur.

Then heard the Rome-folk hard tidings; they saw all the dales, and all the downs, and all the hills covered with helms; high standards, warriors them held, sixty thousand waving with the wind; shields glitter, burnies shine; gold-coloured vests, men most stern; steeds leap—the earth stirred! The emperor saw the king fare, where he was by the wood-shaw; then said he Lucus, the lord of Rome, and spake with his men with loud voice: "What are these outlaws, that have preceded us in this way? Take we our weapons, and march we to them; they shall be slain, and some alive flayed, they all shall be dead, with torment destroyed!" Even with the words they seized their weapons. When they were arrayed with their good weapons, then spake soon Lucus, the lord of Rome: "Quickly advance we to them; we all shall do well!" There were come with him five and twenty kings, heathen folk all, that held of

Rome, earls and eke dukes, of the eastern world. "Lordings," quoth Luces then, "Mahoun be gracious to you! Ye are powerful kings, and obey unto Rome. Rome is my right, richest of all burghs; and I ought to be highest of all men alive. Ye see here on the field those who are our foes; they think to rule highly over our realm; hold us for base, and themselves become rich. But we shall oppose them with bold strength; for our race was highest of all men alive, and won all the lands that they looked on; and Julius the strong marched into Britain, and won to his hands many kingdoms. Now would our underlings be kings over us, but they shall buy it with their bare backs; never again shall they return to Britain!"

Even with the words then moved the army; by thousands and by thousands they thronged together; each king prepared host of his folk. When it was all formed, and the army appointed, then were there right told full fifteen hosts; two kings there were ever comrades; four earls and a duke disposed them together, and the emperor by himself, with ten thousand champions. When the folk gan to stir, the earth gan to din; trumpets there blew; hosts were arrayed; horns there resounded with loud voice, sixty thousand blew together. More there sounded of Arthur's companions than sixty thousand men with horns; the welkin gan to din, the earth gan to tremble! Together they charged as if heaven would fall! First they let fly, exceedingly quick darts all as thick as the snow down falleth; stones they let afterwards sternly wind through the air. Then cracked spears; shivered spears, helms rolled, noble men fell; -burnies brake in pieces, blood outflowed; the fields were discoloured, standards fell! Wounded knights over all wandered over the weald, and sixty hundred there were trodden to death by horses! Knights there perished, blood out ran; flowed by paths bloody streams, -woe was among the folk, -the harm was without bounds! So all as say the writings that skilful men made, that was the third greatest battle that ever here was fought, so that at the last no warrior knew on whom he should smite, and whom he should spare; for no man knew other there, for the quantity of blood!

Then removed the fight from the place where they ere fought, and they began widely to rush together; and a new conflict began, narrowly contested; -there were the Rome-people grievously treated! Then came there three kings, of heathen land; of Ethiopia was the one; the second was an African; the third was of Lybia, of heathen land. They came to the host at the east end, and brake the body-of-troops that the Britons there held, and anon felled fifteen hundred bold thanes of Arthur's folk; then the Britons turned the backs soon. But then came there riding two keen earls, that was, Beduer and Kay, Arthur's cup-bearer and his relative; their Britons they saw hewed in pieces with swords. There became enraged the earls most bold, and with ten thousand knights pressed to the fight, amid the throng, where they were thickest, and slew the Rome-folk very grievously; and went over the fight, after their will. Then were they too daring, and ruled them too evilly; alas! that they were not then wary; that they could not guard themselves against their enemies! For they were too keen, and too presumptuous, and fought too rashly, and too far advanced, and spread too widely over the broad conflict. Then came the King of Media, the mickle and the broad; a heathen chief, -there he harm wrought; he led for companions twenty thousand riders; he held in his hand a spear exceeding strong. The spear he forth thrust with his strong might, and smote the Earl Beduer before in the breast, so that the burny soon burst, before and behind, and his breast was opened; the blood came forth lukewarm. There fell Beduer anon, dead upon the ground; there was misery and sorrow enow! There Kay found Beduer lie him dead there, and Kay would carry away the body with himself; with twenty hundred knights he approached thereabout, and strongly fought, and felled the Rome-folk, and slew there many thousand men of Media; the fight was exceeding strong, and they were thereat long. Then arrived there a king most hateful, with sixty thousand good men of his land; Setor the keen, who came him from Lybia. There the strong king gan him fight with Kay, and wounded Kay sorely in the strong fight, to the bare death-grievous was the deed!

His knights there right carried him from the fight, with mickle strength through the fight they pierced. Woe was to Arthur the king for the tiding! That saw the rich thane, who was named Rid-

wathlan, Beduer's sister's son, of noble Britons he was descended, that Boccus with his strong spear had slain Beduer. Woe was to him alive, when his uncle was dead; for he of all men most him loved. He called knights most good of his kindred, and of the dearest of all that he knew alive; five hundred by tale advanced together. Then said Ridwathlan, noble man of Britain: "Knights, ye are of my kindred, come ye here to me, and avenge we Beduer, mine uncle, who was best of our race, whom Boccus hath slain with his strong spear. Go we all together, and fell our foes!"

Even with the words he forth pushed, and all his noble companions with him anon; and Boccus the king they knew, where he was in the combat; with his spear and with his shield many a knight he killed. Ridwathlan drew out his sword soon, and struck at him, and smote the king on the helm, so that it severed in two, and eke the burny-hood, so that it (the sword) stopt at the teeth; and the heathen king fell to the ground, and his foul soul sank into hell! Ridwathlan then said—cruel he was in mood—"Boccus, now thou hast bought dear that Beduer thou slew; and thy soul shall now be companion of the Worse!" Even with the words, as if it were the wind, he pressed to the fight; as a whirlwind doth in the field, when it heaveth the dust high from the earth, all so Ridwathlan rushed on his enemies. All they it slew that they came nigh, the while that they might wield their noble weapons; in all the fight were no knights better, the while that the life lasted them in their breasts. Boccus the king they slew, and a thousand of his knights; then was Beduer avenged well with the best!

There was a brave earl, of noble race, who was named Leir, lord of Boulogne; he beheld in the fight an enemy advance, that was an admiral, of Babylon he was prince; much folk he felled down to the ground. And the earl that perceived; in heart was to him uneasiness; he drew to his breast a broad shield, and he grasped in his hand a spear that was most strong, and spurred his horse with all his main, and hit the admiral with a smart blow under the breast, that the burny gan to burst, so that the spear pierced through there behind him full a fathom; the wretch fell to the ground! That saw soon the admiral's son, who is named Gecron; and grasped his spear anon, and smote Leir the earl sore on the left side, through-out the heart,—the earl down fell. Walwain perceived that, where he was in the fight; and he wrathed him wondrously much; that saw Howel, noble man of Brittany, and he thither advanced, with fifteen hundred men; hardy warriors with Howel went; and Walwain before them man most stern of mood; he had for comrades five and twenty hundred bold Britons,—then began they to fight!

There were the Rome-folk grievously treated; Howel them attacked, Walwain them met; there was wondrous cry, the welkin resounded; the earth gan to tremble, the stones there shivered! Streams of blood ran from the wretched folk, the slaughter was immense, then were the Britons weary! Kinard, the Earl of Striguil, left the King Howel, and took with him Labius, Rimarc, and Boclovius. These were the keenest men that any king had, these were among men earls mighty strong! They would not, for their mickle mood (pride), follow Howel the good, but by themselves they slew all that they came nigh. That saw a powerful man of the Rome-people, how Kinard the keen killed there his folk, and the knight gan him alight from his dear steed, and took him in his hand a spear made of steel, and bathed it in blood; and he aside went, until he came to the spot where Kinard the strong fought. Kinard's burny he up raised, and he the earl there slew. Then shouted loud all the Rome-folk, and turned to the Britons, and brake their troops; and felled the standards, the folk down sank; shields there shivered, warriors there fell; there fell to ground fifteen thousand bold Britons—mischief there was rife! So lasted long the fight exceeding strong.

Walwain gan pass over the mickle slaughter, and assembled all his knights, where he found them in the fight. There near came riding Howel the mighty; they assembled their fair folk anon, and forth they gan wend, and rode to the Rome-folk with strong wrath, and quickly approached them, and brake their French ranks. And Walwain forth right, there he found Luces the emperor live under shield, and Walwain struck at him with the steel sword, and the emperor struck at him, who was man exceeding stern; shield against shield, the pieces there flew; sword against sword clashed well often, fire flew from the steel; the adversaries were enraged!

There was fight most strong—all the host was stirred! The emperor weened to destroy Walwain, that he might in after days boast for the deed. But the Britons thronged towards them, most angrily, and the Romanish men liberated their emperor; and they charged together as if heaven would fall! All the daylight they held afterwards the fight, a little while ere the sun went to ground. Arthur then called—noblest of all kings: “Now go we all to them, my brave knights! And God himself aid us our enemies to fell!”

Even with the words then blew men the trumpets; fifteen thousand anon thronged together to blow horns and trumps; the earth gan to tremble for the great blast, for the mickle clamour! The Rome-folk turned backs to the fight; standards fell,—noble men perished,—those fled who might,—the fated there fell! Much manslaughter was there; might it no man tell, how many hundred men were there hewed in pieces in the mickle throng, in the manslaughter! The emperor was slain in strange manner, so that no man of ever any country afterwards ever knew it to say, who killed the emperor. But when the fight was all done, and the folk was all in joy, then found men the emperor pierced through with a spear.

Word came to Arthur, where he was in his tent, that the emperor was slam, and deprived of life-day. Arthur caused a tent to be pitched, amidst a broad field, and thither caused to be borne Luces the emperor, and caused him to be covered with gold coloured clothes, and caused him there to be watched three full days, the while he caused to be made a work exceeding rich, a long chest; and it to be covered all with gold. And he caused to be laid therein Luces of Rome, who was a most doughty man, the while his days lasted. The yet did Arthur more, noblest of all Britons, Arthur caused to be sought all the powerful men, kings and earls, and the richest barons, who in the fight were slain, and deprived of life-day; he caused them to be buried with great pomp. But he caused three kings to bear Luces the emperor, and caused a bier to be made, rich and exceeding lofty; and caused them soon to be sent to Rome. And greeted all the Rome-people with a great taunt, and said that he sent them the tribute of his land, and eft would also send them more greeting, if they would yearn of Arthur’s gold; and thereafter full soon ride into Rome, and tell them tidings of the King of Britain, and Rome-walls repair, that were of yore fallen down;—“And so will I rule the fierce Rome-folk!” All this boast was idly done, for otherwise it fared, all otherwise it happened: the people he left, through wicked tiding, all through Modred his relative, wickedest of all men!

In the mickle fight Arthur lost of his knights, five and twenty thousand, hewed in pieces on the ground, of Britons most bold, bereaved of life. Kay was wounded sore, wondrously much; to Kinun he was carried, and soon thereafter he was dead. He was buried there beside the castle, among hermits, who was the noble man. Kay hight the earl, Kinun the castle, Arthur gave him the town, and he thereat was entombed, and set there the name after himself; for Kay’s death he named it Kain (Caen); now and evermore so it hight there. After Beduer was slain, and deprived of life day, Arthur caused him to be borne to his castle Baeios (Bayeux), and there he was buried, in the burgh; without the south gate in earth men him laid. Howeldin was floated forth into Flanders; and all his best knights there floated forth-right into the earldoms whence they there came. And all the dead in earth men them laid; in Terouane they lie all clean.

Leir, the earl, men carried into Boulogne; and Arthur then thereafter dwelt in a land in Burgundy, that to him seemed best; the land he all ruled, and all the castles appointed; and said that he would himself hold the land. And afterwards he made his threat, that he would in summer march into Rome, and acquire all the realm, and himself be emperor where Luces ere dwelt. And many of the Rome folk would that it so should be, for they were adread to their bare death, so that many away there fled, and their castles abandoned; and many sent messengers to Arthur the strong; and many spake with him, and yearned Arthur’s peace; and some they would against Arthur hold, and hold Rome against him, and defend the realm. And nevertheless they were afraid for their destruction, so that they knew not under Christ any good counsel. Then was it there come to pass, what Merlin said erewhile, that Rome-walls should fall down before Arthur; that was fulfilled there by the emperor, who fell there in the fight, with fifty thou-

sand men; there sank to the ground the rich Rome-people! Then Arthur weened in sooth to win all Rome, and dwelt in Burgundy, noblest of all kings.

Then came there on a time a brave man riding, and brought tiding to Arthur the king, from Modred, his sister’s son; to Arthur he was welcome, for he weened that he brought news most good. Arthur lay all the night long, and spake with the young knight; so never would he say to him sooth how it fared. When it was day on the morrow, and people gan to stir, Arthur then up arose, and stretched his arms; he arose up, and sate down, as if he were exceeding sick. Then asked him a fair knight—“Lord, how hast thou fared to-night?” Arthur then answered—in mind he was uneasy: “To-night in my sleep, where I lay in chamber, I dreamt a dream—therefore I am full sorry. I dreamt that men raised me upon a hall; the hall I gan bestride, as if I would ride; all the lands that I possessed, all I there overlooked. And Walwain sate before me; my sword he bare in hand. Then approached Modred there, with innumerable folk; he bare in his hand a battle-axe strong; he began to hew exceeding hardily; and the posts all hewed in pieces, that held up the hall. There I saw Wenhaver eke, dearest of women to me; all the mickle hall roof with her hand she drew down; the hall gan to tumble, and I tumbled to the ground, so that my right arm brake in pieces,—then said Modred, ‘Have that!’ Down fell the hall; and Walwain gan to fall, and fell on the earth; his arms both brake. And I grasped my dear sword with my left hand, and smote off Modred his head, so that it rolled on the field. And the queen I cut all in pieces with my dear sword, and afterwards I set her down in a black pit. And all my good people set to flight, so that I knew not under Christ, where they were gone. But myself I gan stand upon a weald, and I there gan to wander wide over the moors, there I saw gripes, and grisly fowls! Then approached a golden lion over the down;—a beast most fair, that our Lord made;—the lion ran towards me, and took me by the middle, and forth gan her move, and to the sea went. And I saw the waves drive in the sea; and the lion in the flood went with myself. When we came in the sea, the waves took her from me; but there approached a fish, and brought me to land;—then was I all wet, and weary from sorrow, and sick. When I gan to wake, greatly gan I to quake; then gan I to tremble as if I all burnt with fire. And so I have all night of my dream much thought; for I wot with certainty, gone is all my bliss, for ever in my life sorrow I must endure! Alas! that I have not here Wenhaver, my queen!”

Then answered the knight: “Lord, thou hast wrong; men should never a dream with sorrow interpret. Thou art the mightiest man, that reigneth in land, and the wisest of all that dwelleth under heaven. If it were befallen-as will it not our Lord!—that Modred, thy sister’s son, had taken thy queen, and set all thy royal land in his own hand, that thou to him committedest, when thou thoughtest to go to Rome; and had he done all this with his treachery, the yet thou mightest thee avenge with weapon worthily, and eft thy land hold, and govern thy people, and thine enemies fell, who did evil to thee, and slay them all clean, that there remain not one.”

Arthur then answered, noblest of all kings: “So long as is ever, weened I that never, that ever Modred, my relative, who is man dearest to me, would betray me, for all my realm, nor Wenhaver, my queen, weaken in thought; would it not begin, for any worldly man!”

Even with the words forth-right then answered the knight: “I say thee sooth, dear king, for I am thy underling. Thus hath Modred done; thy queen he hath taken, and thy fair land set in his own hand. He is king, and she is queen; of thy coming is there no expectation, for they ween not ever in sooth, that thou shalt come back from Rome. I am thine own man, and saw this treason; and I am come to thyself, to say thee sooth. My head be in pledge, that I have said thee sooth, without leasing, of thy loved queen, and of Modred, thy sister’s son, how he hath taken Britain from thee.”

Then sate it all still in Arthur’s hall; then was there sorrow with the good king; then were the British men therefore exceedingly dispirited. Then after a while voices there stirred; wide men might hear the Britons’ clamour, and gan to tell in speeches of many kind, how they would destroy Modred and the queen, and slay all the people that held with Modred.

Arthur then called, fairest of all Britons: "Sit ye down still, knights in hall, and I will you tell strange discourse. Now to-morrow, when it is day, and the Lord it sendeth, forth I will march in toward Britain; and Modred I will slay, and burn the queen; and all I will destroy, that approved the treachery. And here I will leave the dearest of men to me, Howel, my loved relative, noblest of my kin; and half my army I will leave in this land, to maintain all this kingdom, that I have in my hand. And when these things are all done, back I will come to Rome, and deliver my fair land to Walwain my relation; and afterwards perform my threat, by my bare life; all my enemies shall be destroyed!"

Then stood him up Walwain, who was Arthur's relative, and said these words,—the earl was incensed: "Almighty God! ruler of dooms, guardian of all middle-earth! Why is it befallen, that my brother Modred this sin has wrought? But to-day I forsake him here, before this assembly; and I will him destroy with the Lord's will; myself I will him hang, highest of all wretches; the queen I will, with God's law, draw all in pieces with horses. For may I never be blithe, the while I am alive, until I have avenged mine uncle with the best!"

Then answered the Britons with bold voice: "All our weapons are ready; now to-morrow we shall march!" On the morrow when it was day, and the Lord it sent, Arthur forth him moved, with his good folk; half he it left, and half it forth led. Forth he marched through the land until he came to Whitsand; ships he had soon, many and excellent; but full a fortnight there lay the host, abiding the weather, deprived of wind (becalmed).

Now was there some wicked knight in Arthur's army, anon as he heard it determined of Modred's death, he took his swain quickly, and sent to this land; and sent word to Wenhaver, how it had happened, and how Arthur was on his march, with a great host, and how he would take on, and all how he would do. The queen came to Modred, who was to her dearest of men, and told him tiding of Arthur the king, how he would take on, and all how he would do.

Modred took his messengers, and sent to Saxland, after Childrich, who was king most powerful, and bade him come to Britain—thereof he should have possession. Modred bade Childrich, the strong and the rich, to send messengers wide, on the four sides of Saxland, and bid all the knights that they might get, that they should come soon to this kingdom; and he would to Childrich give part of his realm, all beyond the Humber; because he should him help to fight against his uncle King Arthur. Childrich proceeded soon into Britain. When Modred had assembled his host of men, then were there told sixty thousand hardy warriors of heathen folk, when they were come hither, for Arthur's harm, and to help Modred, wickedest of men! When the army was gathered of each people, then were they there in a heap an hundred thousand, heathens and christians, with Modred the king.

Arthur lay at Whitsand; a fortnight seemed to him too long; and Modred knew all what Arthur there would; each day came messengers to him from the king's army. Then befell it on a time, much rain it gan to rain, and the wind it gan to turn, and stood from the east end. And Arthur proceeded to ship with all his host, and ordered that his shipmen should bring him to Romney, where he thought to come up into this land. When he came to the haven, Modred was opposite to him, as the day gan light, they began to fight, all the day long; many a man dead there lay! Some they fought on land, some by the strand; some they let fly sharp spears out of the ships. Walwain went before, and cleared the way; and slew there soon eleven thanes; he slew Childrich's son, who was come there with his father. To rest went the sun; woe was then to the men! There was Walwain slain, and deprived of life-day, through a Saxish earl—sorry be his soul! Then was Arthur sorry, and sorrowful therefore in heart; and these words said, mightiest of all Britons: "Now I have lost my loved swains! I knew by my dream, what sorrow were given to me! Slain is Angel the king, who was mine own darling, and Walwain, my sister's son—woe is me that I was born man! Up now from ship, quickly, my brave knights!"

Even with the words sixty thousand good warriors pressed anon to the fight, and brake Modred's ranks, and well nigh him-

self was taken. Modred began to flee, and his folk to follow after; they fled exceedingly, the fields eke trembled; the stones jar with the blood-streams! There would have been all the fight ended, but the night came too soon; if the night had not been, they all would have been slain!

The night separated them over slades and over downs; and Modred came so far forth, that he was at London. The burghmen heard how it had all fared, and denied him entry, and all his folk. Modred thence went toward Winchester; and they him received, with all his men. And Arthur pursued after, with all his might, until he came to Winchester, with a mickle host, and the burgh all besieged; and Modred therein abode. When Modred saw that Arthur was so nigh to him, oft he bethought him what he might do. Then on the same night, he ordered all his knights, with all their weapons, to march out of the burgh; and said that he would with fight there make a stand. He promised the burghmen free law evermore, on condition that they should help him at his great need.

When it was daylight, then ready was their fight. Arthur that perceived—the king was enraged; he caused trumpets to be blown, and men to be assembled to battle; he commanded all his thanes, and his noble knights, together to take the fight, and fell his enemies, and the burgh all to destroy, and hang the burgh-folk. They stept together, and sternly fought. Modred then thought what he might do; and he did there as he did elsewhere, treachery with the most! For ever he did wickedly; he betrayed his comrades before Winchester, and caused his dearest knights to be called to him anon, and his dearest friends all, of all his folk; and stole away from the fight—the fiend him have!—and let the good folk all there perish. They fought all day; they weened that their lord there lay, and were near them at their great need. Then bent he the way that toward Hampton lay; and bent toward the haven—wickedest of men—took all the ships that there good were, and all the steersmen, to the need of the ships; and proceeded into Cornwall—wickedest of kings in those days! And Arthur besieged well firmly Winchester the burgh; and slew all the people—there was sorrow enow—the young and the old, all he killed. When the folk was all dead, and the burgh all burnt, then caused he withal all the walls to be broken in pieces. Then was it there come to pass, that Merlin whilom said:

"Wretched shalt thou be, Winchester! the earth shall thee swallow!" So Merlin said, who was a great prophet.

The queen lay in York; never was she so sorrowful; that was Wenhaver the queen, most miserable of women! She heard say sooth words, how often Modred fled, and how Arthur him pursued; woe was to her the while, that she was alive! Out of York she went by night, and toward Kaerleon drew, as quickly as she might; thither she brought by night two of her knights; and men covered her head with a holy veil, and she was there a nun; woman most wretched! Then men knew not of the queen, where she were gone, nor many years afterwards man knew it in sooth, whether she were dead, or whether she herself were sunk in the water.

Modred was in Cornwall, and gathered many knights; to Ireland he sent his messengers quickly; to Saxland he sent his messengers quickly; to Scotland he sent his messengers quickly; he ordered them all to come anon, that would have land, or silver, or gold, or possessions, or land; in each wise he warned himself each man;—so doth each prudent man upon whom cometh need.

Arthur that heard, wrathest of kings, that Modred was in Cornwall with a mickle army, and there would abide until Arthur approached. Arthur sent messengers over all his kingdom, and bade all to come that was alive in land, that to fight were good, weapons to bear; and whoso it neglected, that the king commanded, the king would him all consume alive in the land. Innumerable folk it came toward the host, riding and on foot, as the rain down falleth!

Arthur marched to Cornwall, with an immense army. Modred heard that, and advanced against him with innumerable folk—there were many fated! Upon the Tambre they came together; the place hight Camelford, evermore lasted the same word. And at Camelford was assembled sixty thousand men, and more thousands thereto; Modred was their chief. Then thitherward gan ride Arthur the mighty, with innumerable folk—fated though it were! Upon the Tambre they encountered together; elevated their stan-

dards; advanced together; drew their long swords, and smote on the helms; fire out sprang; spears splintered; shields gan shiver; shafts brake in pieces! There fought all together innumerable folk! Tambre was in flood with blood to excess; there might no man in the fight know any warrior, nor who did worse, nor who did better, so was the conflict mingled! For each slew downright, were he swain, were he knight. There was Modred slain, and deprived of life-day, and all his knights slain in the fight. There were slain all the brave, Arthur's warriors, high and low, and all the Britons of Arthur's board, and all his dependants, of many kingdoms. And Arthur himself wounded with a broad slaughter-spear; fifteen dreadful wounds he had; in the least one might thrust two gloves! Then was there no more remained in the fight, of two hundred thousand men that there lay hewed in pieces, except Arthur the king alone, and two of his knights.

Arthur was wounded wondrously much. There came to him a lad, who was of his kindred; he was Cador's son, the Earl of Cornwall; Constantine the lad hight, he was dear to the king. Arthur looked on him, where he lay on the ground, and said these words, with sorrowful heart: "Constantine, thou art welcome; thou wert Cador's son. I give thee here my kingdom, and defend thou my Britons ever in thy life, and maintain them all the laws that have stood in my days, and all the good laws that in Uther's days stood. And I will fare to Avalun, to the fairest of all maidens, to Argante the queen, an elf most fair, and she shall make my wounds all sound; make me all whole with healing draughts. And afterwards I will come again to my kingdom, and dwell with the Britons with mickle joy."

Even with the words there approached from the sea that was a short boat, floating with the waves; and two women therein, wondrously formed; and they took Arthur anon, and bare him quickly, and laid him softly down, and forth they gan depart.

Then was it accomplished that Merlin whilom said, that mickle care should be of Arthur's departure. The Britons believe yet that he is alive, and dwelleth in Avalun with the fairest of all elves; and the Britons ever yet expect when Arthur shall return. Was never the man born, of ever any lady chosen, that knoweth of the sooth, to say more of Arthur. But whilom was a sage hight Merlin; he said with words—his sayings were sooth—that an Arthur should yet come to help the English.

Nibelungenlied

ADVENTURE I.

Full many a wonder is told us in stories old, of heroes worthy of praise, of hardships dire, of joy and feasting, of the fighting of bold warriors, of weeping and of wailing; now ye may hear wonders told.

In Burgundy there grew so noble a maid that in all the lands none fairer might there be. Kriemhild was she called; a comely woman she became, for whose sake many a knight must needs lose his life. Well worth the loving was this winsome maid. Bold knights strove for her, none bare her hate. Her peerless body was beautiful beyond degree; the courtly virtues of this maid of noble birth would have adorned many another woman too.

Three kings, noble and puissant, did nurture her, Gunther and Gernot, warriors worthy of praise, and Giselher, the youth, a chosen knight. This lady was their sister, the princes had her in their care. The lordings were free in giving, of race high-born, passing bold of strength were they, these chosen knights. Their realm high Burgundy. Great marvels they wrought hereafter in Etzel's land. At Worms upon the Rhine they dwelt with all their power. Proud knights from out their lands served them with honor, until their end was come. Thereafter they died grievously, through the hate of two noble dames.

Their mother, a mighty queen, was called the Lady Uta, their father, Dankrat, who left them the heritage after his life was over; a mighty man of valor that he was, who won thereto in youth worship full great. These kings, as I have said, were of high prowess. To them owed allegiance the best of warriors, of whom tales were ever told, strong and brave, fearless in the sharp strife. Hagen there was of Troneg, thereto his brother Dankwart, the doughty; Ortwin of Metz; Gere and Eckewart, the margraves twain; Folker of Alzei, endued with fullness of strength. Rumolt was master of the kitchen, a chosen knight; the lords Sindolt and Hunolt, liegemen of these three kings, had rule of the court and of its honors. Thereto had they many a warrior whose name I cannot tell. Dankwart was marshal; his nephew, Ortwin, seneschal unto the king; Sindolt was cupbearer, a chosen knight; Hunolt served as chamberlain; well they wot how to fill these lofty stations. Of the forces of the court and its far-reaching might, of the high worship and of the chivalry these lords did ply with joy throughout their life, of this forsooth none might relate to you the end.

In the midst of these high honors Kriemhild dreamed a dream, of how she trained a falcon, strong, fair, and wild, which, before her very eyes, two eagles rent to pieces. No greater sorrow might chance to her in all this world. This dream then she told to Uta her mother, who could not unfold it to the dutiful maid in better wise than this: "The falcon which thou trainest, that is a noble man, but thou must needs lose him soon, unless so be that God preserve him."

"Why speakest thou to me of men, dear brother mine? I would fain ever be without a warrior's love. So fair will I remain until my death, that I shall never gain woe from love of man."

"Now forswear this not too roundly," spake the mother in reply. "If ever thou shalt wax glad of heart in this world, that will chance through the love of man. Passing fair wilt thou become, if God grant thee a right worthy knight."

"I pray you leave this speech," spake she, "my lady. Full oft hath it been seen in many a wife, how joy may at last end in sorrow. I shall avoid them both, then can it ne'er go ill with me."

Thus in her heart Kriemhild forswore all love. Many a happy day thereafter the maiden lived without that she wist any whom she would care to love. In after days she became with worship a valiant here's bride. He was the selfsame falcon which she beheld in her dream that her mother unfolded to her. How sorely did she avenge this upon her nearest kin, who slew him after! Through his dying alone there fell full many a mother's son.

ADVENTURE II. Of Siegfried.

In the Netherlands there grew the child of a noble king (his father had for name Siegmund, his mother Siegelind), in a mighty castle, known far and wide, in the lowlands of the Rhine: Xanten, men called it. Of this hero I sing, how fair he grew. Free he was of every blemish. Strong and famous he later became, this valiant man. Ho! What great worship he won in this world! Siegfried hight this good and doughty knight. Full many kingdoms did he put to the test through his warlike mood. Through his strength of body he rode into many lands. Ho! What bold warriors he after found in the Burgundian land! Mickle wonders might one tell of Siegfried in his prime, in youthful days; what honors he received and how fair of body he. The most stately women held him in their love; with the zeal which was his due men trained him. But of himself what virtues he attained! Truly his father's lands were honored, that he was found in all things of such right lordly mind. Now was he become of the age that he might ride to court. Gladly the people saw him, many a maid wished that his desire might ever bear him hither. Enow gazed on him with favor; of this the prince was well aware. Full seldom was the youth allowed to ride without a guard of knights. Siegmund and Siegelind bade deck him out in brave attire. The older knights who were acquaint with courtly custom, had him in their care. Well therefore might he win both folk and land.

Now he was of the strength that he bare weapons well. Whatever he needed thereto, of this he had enow. With purpose he began to woo fair ladies; these bold Siegfried courted well in proper wise. Then bade Siegmund have cried to all his men, that he would hold a feasting with his loving kindred. The tidings thereof men brought into the lands of other kings. To the strangers and the home-folk he gave steeds and armor. Wheresoever any was found who, because of his birth, should become a knight, these noble youths were summoned to the land for the feasting. Here with the youthful prince they gained the knightly sword. Wonders might one tell of this great feast; Siegmund and Siegelind wist well how to gain great worship with their gifts, of which their hands dealt out great store. Wherefore one beheld many strangers riding to their realm. Four hundred sword-thanes were to put on knightly garb with Siegfried. Many a fair maid was aught but idle with the work, for he was beloved of them all. Many precious stones the ladies inlaid on the gold, which together with the edging they would work upon the dress of the proud young warriors, for this must needs be done.

The host bade make benches for the many valiant men, for the midsummer festival, at which Siegfried should gain the name of knight. Then full many a noble knight and many a high-born squire did hie them to the minster. Right were the elders in that they served the young, as had been done to them afore. Pastimes they had and hope of much good cheer. To the honor of God a mass was sung; then there rose from the people full great a

press, as the youths were made knights in courtly wise, with such great honors as might not ever lightly be again. Then they ran to where they found saddled many a steed. In Siegmund's court the hurtling waxed so fierce that both palace and hall were heard to ring; the high-mettled warriors clashed with mighty sound. From young and old one heard many a shock, so that the splintering of the shafts reechoed to the clouds. Truncheons were seen flying out before the palace from the hand of many a knight. This was done with zeal. At length the host bade cease the tourney and the steeds were led away. Upon the turf one saw all to-shivered many a mighty buckler and great store of precious stones from the bright spangles of the shields. Through the hurtling this did hap.

Then the guests of the host betook them to where men bade them sit. With good cheer they refreshed them and with the very best of wine, of which one bare frill plenty. To the strangers and the home-folk was shown worship enow. Though much pastime they had throughout the day, many of the strolling folk forswore all rest. They served for the largess, which men found there richly, whereby Siegmund's whole land was decked with praise. Then bade the king enfeoff Siegfried, the youth, with land and castles, as he himself had done. Much his hand bestowed upon the sword-companions. The journey liked them well, that to this land they were come. The feasting lasted until the seventh day. Siegelind, the noble queen, for the love of her son, dealt out ruddy gold in time-honored wise. Full well she wot how to make him beloved of the folk. Scarce could a poor man be found among the strolling mimes. Steeds and raiment were scattered by their hand, as if they were to live not one more day. I trow that never did serving folk use such great bounty. With worshipful honors the company departed hence. Of the mighty barons the tale doth tell that they desired the youth unto their lord, but of this the stately knight, Sir Siegfried, listed naught. Forasmuch as both Siegmund and Siegelind were still alive, the dear child of them twain wished not to wear a crown, but fain would he become a lord against all the deeds of force within his lands, whereof the bold and daring knight was sore adread.

ADVENTURE III. How Siegfried Came to Worms.

It was seldom that sorrow of heart perturbed the prince. He heard tales told of how there lived in Burgundy a comely maid, fashioned wondrous fair, from whom he thereafter gained much of joy, but suffering, too. Her beauty out of measure was known far and wide. So many a here heard of her noble mind, that it alone brought many a guest to Gunther's land. But however many were seen wooing for her love, Kriemhild never confessed within her heart that she listed any for a lover. He was still a stranger to her, whose rule she later owned. Then did the son of Siegelind aspire to lofty love; the wooing of all others was to his but as the wind, for well he wot how to gain a lady fair. In later days the noble Kriemhild became bold Siegfried's bride. Kinsmen and liegemen enow advised him, since he would have hope of constant love, that he woo one who was his peer. At this bold Siegfried spake: "Then will I choose Kriemhild, the fair maid of Burgundy, for her beauty beyond measure. This I know full well, never was emperor so mighty, and he would have a wife, that it would not besem him to love this noble queen."

Tidings of this reached Siegmund's ear; through the talk of the courtiers he was made ware of the wish of his son. Full loth it was to the king, that his child would woo the glorious maid. Siegelind heard it too, the wife of the noble king. Greatly she feared for her child, for full well she knew Gunther and his men. Therefore they sought to turn the hero from this venture. Up spake then the daring Siegfried: "Dear father mine, I would fain ever be without the love of noble dames, if I may not woo her in whom my heart hath great delight; whatsoever any may aver, it will avail but naught."

"And thou wilt not turn back," spake the king, "then am I in sooth glad of thy will and will help thee bring it to pass, as best I may. Yet hath this King Gunther full many a haughty man. If there were none else but Hagen, the doughty knight, he can use

such arrogance that I fear me it will repent us sore, if we woo this high-born maid."

Then Siegfried made reply: "Wherefore need that hinder us? What I may not obtain from them in friendly wise, that my hand and its strength can gain. I trow that I can wrest from him both folk and land."

To this Prince Siegmund replied: "Thy speech liketh me not, for if this tale were told upon the Rhine, then durst thou never ride unto that land. Long time have Gunther and Gernot been known to me. By force may none win the maid, of this have I been well assured; but wilt thou ride with warriors unto this land, and we still have aught of friends, they shall be summoned soon."

"It is not to my mind," spake again Siegfried, "that warriors should follow me to the Rhine, as if for battle, that I constrain thereby the noble maid. My single hand can win her well—with eleven comrades I will fare to Gunther's land; thereto shalt thou help me, Father Siegmund." Then to his knights they gave for garments furs both gray and vair.

Now his mother Siegelind also heard the tale. She began to make dole for her loved child, whom she feared to lose through Gunther's men. Sorely the noble queen gan weep. Lord Siegfried hied him straightway to where he saw her; to his mother he spake in gentle wise: "Lady, ye must not weep for me; naught have I to fear from all his fighting men. I pray you, speed me on my journey to the Burgundian land, that I and my warriors may have array such as proud heroes can wear with honor; for this I will say you gramerly i' faith."

"Since naught will turn thee," spake then the Lady Siegelind, "so will I speed thee on thy journey, mine only child, with the best of weeds that ever knight did wear, thee and thy comrades. Ye shall have enow."

Siegfried, the youth, then made low obeisance to the queen. He spake: "None but twelve warriors will I have upon the way. Let raiment be made ready for them, I pray, for I would fain see how it standeth with Kriemhild."

Then sate fair ladies night and day. Few enow of them, I trow, did ease them, till Siegfried's weeds had all been wrought. Nor would he desist from faring forth. His father bade adorn the knightly garb in which his son should ride forth from Siegmund's land. The shining breastplates, too, were put in trim, also the stanch helmets and their shields both fair and broad. Now their journey to the Burgundian land drew near; man and wife began to fear lest they never should come home again. The heroes bade lade their sumpters with weapons and with harness. Their steeds were fair and their trappings red with gold. No need were there to live more proudly than Siegfried and his men. Then he asked for leave to journey to the land of Burgundy; this the king and queen sorrowfully vouchsafed. Lovingly he comforted them twain. "For my sake," spake he, "must ye not weep, nor have fear for me or for my life."

The warriors, too, were sad and many a maiden wept; I ween, their hearts did tell them rightly that many of their kinsmen would come to death because of this. Just cause had they for wailing; need enow they had in sooth.

Upon the seventh morning, forth upon the river sand at Worms the brave warriors pricked. Their armor was of ruddy gold and their trappings fashioned fair. Smoothly trotted the steeds of bold Siegfried's men. Their shields were new; gleaming and broad and fair their helmets, as Siegfried, the bold, rode to court in Gunther's land. Never had such princely attire been seen on heroes; their sword-points hung down to their spurs. Sharp javelins were borne by these chosen knights. Siegfried wielded one full two spans broad, which upon its edges cut most dangerously. In their hands they held gold-colored bridles; their martingales were silken: so they came into the land. Everywhere the folk began to gape amazed and many of Gunther's men fared forth to meet them. High-mettled warriors, both knight and squire, betook them to the lords (as was but right), and received into the land of their lords these guests and took from their hands the black sumpters which bore the shields. The steeds, too, they wished to lead away for easement. How boldly then brave Siegfried spake: "Let stand the mounts of me and of my men. We will soon hence again, of this have I great desire. Whosoever knoweth rightly where I can

find the king, Gunther, the mighty, of Burgundian land, let him not keep his peace but tell me."

Then up spake one to whom it was rightly known: "Would ye find the king, that can hap full well. In yon broad hall with his heroes did I but see him. Ye must hither hie you; there ye may find with him many a lordly man."

To the king now the word was brought, that full lusty knights were come, who wore white breastplates and princely garb. None knew them in the Burgundian land. Much it wondered the king whence came these lordly warriors in such shining array, with such good shields, both new and broad. Loth was it to Gunther, that none could tell him this. Then Ortwin of Metz (a bold and mighty man was he) made answer to the king: "Since we know them not, ye should send for mine uncle Hagen, and let him see them. To him are known all kingdoms and foreign lands. If so be he knoweth these lords, he will tell us straightway."

Then bade the king that Hagen and his men be brought. One saw him with his warriors striding in lordly wise unto the court. "What would the king of me?" asked Hagen.

"There be come to my house strange warriors, whelm here none knoweth. If ye have ever seen them, I pray you, Hagen, tell me now the truth."

"That will I," spake then Hagen. He hied him to a window and over the guests he let his glances roam. Well liked him their trappings and their array, but full strange were they to him in the Burgundian land. He spake: "From wheresoever these warriors be come unto the Rhine, they may well be princes or envoys of kings, for their steeds are fair and their garments passing good. Whencesoever they bear these, forsooth high-mettled warriors be they."

"I dare well say," so spake Hagen, "though I never have seen Siegfried, yet can I well believe, however this may be, that he is the warrior that strideth yonder in such lordly wise. He bringeth new tidings hither to this land. By this here's hand were slain the bold Nibelungs, Schilbung and Nibelung, sons of a mighty king. Since then he hath wrought great marvels with his huge strength. Once as the hero rode alone without all aid, he found before a mountain, as I have in sooth been told, by Nibelung's hoard full many a daring man. Strangers they were to him, till he gained knowledge of them there."

"The hoard of Nibelung was borne entire from out a hollow hill. Now hear a wondrous tale, of how the liegemen of Nibelung wished to divide it there. This the hero Siegfried saw and much it gan wonder him. So near was he now come to them, that he beheld the heroes, and the knights espied him, too. One among them spake: 'Here cometh the mighty Siegfried, the hero of Netherland.' Passing strange were the tidings that, he found among the Nibelungs. Schilbung and Nibelung greeted well the knight; with one accord these young and noble lordings bade the stately man divide the hoard. Eagerly they asked it, and the lord in turn gan vow it to them."

"He beheld such store of gems, as we have heard said, that a hundred wains might not bear the load; still more was there of ruddy gold from the Nibelung land. All this the hand of the daring Siegfried should divide. As a guerdon they gave him the sword of Nibelung, but they were served full ill by the service which the good knight Siegfried should render them. Nor could he end it for them; angry of mood they grew. Twelve bold men of their kith were there, mighty giants these. What might that avail them! Siegfried's hand slew them soon in wrath, and seven hundred warriors from the Nibelung land he vanquished with the good sword Balmung. Because of the great fear that, many a young warrior had of the sword and of the valiant man, they made the land and its castles subject to his hand. Likewise both the mighty kings he slew, but soon he himself was sorely pressed by Alberich. The latter weened to venge straightway his masters, till he then discovered Siegfried's mighty strength; for no match for him was the sturdy dwarf. Like wild lions they ran to the hill, where from Alberich he won the Cloak of Darkness. Thus did Siegfried, the terrible, become master of the hoard; those who had dared the combat, all lay there slain. Soon bade he cart and bear the treasure to the place from whence the men of Nibelung had borne it forth. He made Alberich, the strong, warden of the hoard and bade

him swear an oath to serve him as his knave; and fit he was for work of every sort."

So spake Hagen of Troneg: "This he hath done. Nevermore did warrior win such mighty strength. I wot yet more of him: it is known to me that the hero slew a dragon and bathed him in the blood, so that his skin became like horn. Therefore no weapons will cut him, as hath full oft been seen. All the better must we greet this lord, that we may not earn the youthful warrior's hate. So bold is he that we should hold him as a friend, for he hath wrought full many a wonder by his strength."

Then spake the mighty king: "Thou mayst well have right. Behold how valiantly he with his knights doth stand in lust of battle, the daring man! Let us go down to meet the warrior."

"That ye may do with honor," spake then Hagen; "he is of noble race, son of a mighty king. God wot, methinks, he beareth him in such wise, that it can be no little matter for which he hath ridden hither."

"Now be he welcome to us," spake then the king of the land. "He is both noble and brave, as I have heard full well. This shall stand him in good stead in the Burgundian land." Then went Lord Gunther to where Siegfried stood.

The host and his warriors received the guest in such wise that full little was there lack of worship. Low bowed the stately man, that they had greeted him so fair. "It wondereth me," spake the king straightway, "whence ye, noble Siegfried, be come unto this land, or what ye seek at Worms upon the Rhine."

Then the stranger made answer to the king: "This will I not conceal from you. Tales were told me in my father's land, that here with you were the boldest warriors that ever king did gain. This I have often heard, and that I might know it of a truth, therefore am I come. Likewise do I hear boasting of your valor, that no bolder king hath ever been seen. This the folk relate much through all these lands. Therefore will I not turn back, till it be known to me. I also am a warrior and was to wear a crown. Fain would I bring it to pass that it may be said of me: Rightly doth he rule both folk and land. Of this shall my head and honor be a pledge. Now be ye so bold, as hath been told me, I reckon not be it lief or loth to any man, I will gain from you whatso ye have—land and castles shall be subject to my hand."

The king had likewise his men had marvel at the tidings they here heard, that he was willed to take from them their land. The knights waxed wroth, as they heard this word. "How have I earned this," spake Gunther, the knight, "that we should lose by the force of any man that which my father hath rules so long with honor? We should let it ill appear that we, too, are used in knightly ways."

"In no wise will I desist," spake again the valiant man. "Unless it be that through thy strength thy land have peace, I will rule it all. And shouldst thou gain, by thy strength, my ancestral lands, they shall be subject to thy sway. Thy lands, and mine as well, shall lie alike; whether of us twain can triumph over the other, him shall both land and people serve."

Hagen and Gernot, too, straightway gainsaid this. "We have no wish," spake Gernot, "that we should conquer aught of lands, or that any man lie dead at hero's hands. We have rich lands, which serve us, as is meet, nor hath any a better claim to them than we."

There stood his kinsmen, grim of mood; among them, too, Ortwin of Metz. "It doth irk me much to hear these words of peace," spake he; "the mighty Siegfried hath defied you for no just cause. Had ye and your brothers no meet defense, and even if he led a kingly troop, I trow well so to fight that the daring man have good cause to leave this haughty mien."

At this the hero of Netherland grew wonderly wroth. He spake: "Thy hand shall not presume against me. I am a mighty king, a king's vassal thou. Twelve of thy ilk durst not match me in strife."

Then Ortwin of Metz called loudly for swords. Well was he fit to be Hagen of Troneg's sister's son. It rued the king that he had held his peace so long. Then Gernot, the bold and lusty knight, came in between. He spake to Ortwin: "Now give over thy anger. Lord Siegfried hath done us no such wrong, but that we may still part the strife in courteous wise. Be advised of me and hold him still as friend; far better will this beseem us."

Then spake the doughty Hagen: "It may well grieve us and all thy knights that he ever rode for battle to the Rhine. He should

have given it over; my lordings never would have done such ill to him."

To this Siegfried, the mighty man, made answer: "Doth this irk you, Sir Hagen, which I spake, then will I let you see that my hands shall have dominion here in the Burgundian land."

"I alone will hinder this," answered Gernot, and he forbade his knights speak aught with haughtiness that might cause rue. Siegfried, too, then bethought him of the noble maid.

"How might it besem us to fight with you?" spake Gernot anew. "However really heroes should lie dead because of this, we should have scant honor therefrom and ye but little gain."

To this Siegfried, the son of Siegmund, made reply: "Why waiteth Hagen, and Ortwin, too, that he hasteth not to fight with his kin, of whom he hath so many here in Burgundy?"

At this all held their peace; such was Gernot's counsel. Then spake Queen Uta's son: "Ye shall be welcome to us with all your war-mates, who are come with you. We shall gladly serve you, I and all my kin."

Then for the guests they bade pour out King Gunther's wine. The master of the land then spake: "All that we have, if ye desire it in honorable wise, shall owe fealty to you; with you shall both life and goods be shared."

At this Lord Siegfried grew of somewhat gentler mood. Then they bade that care be taken of the armor of the guests. The best of hostels that men might find were sought for Siegfried's squires; great easement they gave them. Thereafter they gladly saw the guest in Burgundy. Many a day they offered him great worship, a thousand fold more than I can tell you. This his prowess wrought; ye may well believe, full scant a one he saw who was his foe.

Whenever the lordings and their liegemen did play at knightly games, Siegfried was aye the best, whatever they began. Herein could no one match him, so mighty was his strength, whether they threw the stone or hurled the shaft. When through courtesie the full lusty knights made merry with the ladies, there were they glad to see the hero of Netherland, for upon high love his heart was bent. He was aye ready for whatso they undertook, but in his heart he bare a lovely maid, whom he had never seen. She too, who in secret spake full well of him, cherished him alone. Whenever the pages, squires, and knights would play their games within the court, Kriemhild, the noble queen, watched them from the windows, for no other pastime she needed on such days. Had he known that she gazed on him thus, whom he bare within his heart, then had he had pastime enough, I trow, for well I wot that no greater joy in all this world could chance to him.

Whenever he stood by the heroes in the court, as men still are wont to do, for pastime's sake, so winsome was the posture of Siegelind's son, that many a lady loved him for very joy of heart. But he bethought him many a day: "How shall that hap, that I with mine own eyes may see the noble maid, whom I do love with all my heart and so have done long time. Sadly must I stand, sith she be still a stranger to me."

Whenever the mighty kings fared forth into their land, the warriors all must needs accompany them at hand, and Siegfried, too. This the lady rued, and he, too, suffered many pangs for love of her. Thus he dwelt with the lordings, of a truth, full a year in Gunther's land, and in all this time he saw not once the lovely maid, from whom in later days there happened to him much joy and eke much woe.

ADVENTURE IV. How He Fought with the Saxons.

Now there came strange tales to Gunther's land, though messengers sent them from afar—tales of unknown warriors, who bare them hate. When they heard this word, in sooth it pleased them not. These warriors will I name to you: there was Liudeger of Saxon land, a great and lordly prince, and then from Denmark Lindegast, the king. For their journey they had gathered many a lordly stranger.

To Gunther's land were come the messengers his foes had sent. Men asked the strangers for their tidings and bade them hie them soon to court unto King Gunther. The king gave them greeting fair; he spake: "Be ye welcome. I have not heard who sent you

hither, but let that now be told." So spake the right good king. But they feared full sore King Gunther's warlike mood.

"Will ye, O King, permit that we tell the tales we bring, then we shall not hold our tongue, but name to you the lordings who have sent us hither: Liudegast and Liudeger; they would march upon this land. Ye have earned their wrath, indeed we heard that both lords bear you mortal hate. They would harry at Worms upon the Rhine and have the aid of many a knight; that may ye know upon our faith. Within twelve weeks the journey must befall. And ye have aught of good friends, who will help guard your castles and your lands, let this soon be seen. Here shall be carved by them many a helm and shield. Or would ye parley with them, let messengers be sent. Then the numerous bands of your mighty foes will not ride so near you, to give you pain of heart, from which full many a lusty knight and a good must die."

"Now bide a time," spake the good king, "till I bethink me better; then ye shall know my mind. Have I aught of trusty men, I will not withhold from them these startling tales, but will make complaint thereof unto my friends."

To Gunther, the mighty king, it was loth enow, but in his heart he bare the speech in secret wise. He bade Hagen be fetched and others of his men, and sent eftsoon to court for Gernot. Then came the very best of men that could be found. The king spake: "Men would seek us here in this our land with mighty armies, now make ye wail for that."

To this Gernot, a brave and lusty knight, made answer: "That will we fend indeed with swords. Only the fey will fall. So let them die; for their sake I will not forget my honor. Let these foes of ours be welcome to us."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "This thinketh me not good. Liudegast and Liudeger bear great arrogance; nor can we summon all our men in such short time. Why tell ye not Siegfried of the thing?" So spake the valiant knight.

To the messengers they bade give lodging in the town. Whatever hate they bore them, yet Gunther, the mighty, bade purvey them well, as was but right, till he discovered of his friends who there was who would lend him aid. Yet in his fears the king was ill at ease. Just then full blithe a knight, who wot not what had happened, saw him thus sad and prayed King Gunther to tell him of the matter. "Much it wondereth me," spake Siegfried, for he it was, "that ye thus have changed your merry wont, which ye have used thus far with us."

To this Gunther, the stately knight, replied: "It liketh me not to tell all folk the grievance which I must bear within my heart in secret wise. Only to trusty friends should one confide his woe of heart."

At this Siegfried's color waxed both pale and red. To the king he spake: "I have denied you naught and will gladly help you turn aside your woes. And ye seek friends, I will be one of them and trow well to deport myself with honor until mine end."

"Now God reward you, Sir Siegfried, your speech thinketh me good, and though your prowess help me not, yet do I rejoice to hear that ye are friend to me, and live I yet a while, I shall repay you well. I will let you hear why I stand thus sad; from the messengers of my foes I have heard that they would visit me with war, a thing which knights have never done to us in all these lands."

"Regard this lightly," spake then Siegfried, "and calm your mood. Do as I pray you. Let me gain for you both worship and advantage and do ye command your knights, that they gather to your aid. Should your mighty foes be helped by thirty thousand men, yet could I withstand them, had I but a thousand; for that rely on me."

Then spake King Gunther: "For this I'll serve you ever."

"So bid me call a thousand of your men, since of mine own I have but twelve, and I will guard your land. Faithfully shall the hand of Siegfried serve you. Hagen shall help us and also Ortwin, Dankwart, and Sindolt, your trusty men. Folker, the valiant man, shall also ride along; he shall bear the banner, for to none would I liefer grant it. Let now the envoys ride home to their masters' lands. Give them to understand they soon shall see us, that our castles may rest in peace."

Then the king bade summon both his kinsmen and his men. The messengers of Liudeger betook them to the court. Fain they

were that they should journey home again. Gunther, the good king, made offrance of rich gifts and gave them safe-convoy. At this their spirits mounted high. "Now say unto my foes," spake then Gunther, "that they may well give over their journey and stay at home; but if they will seek me here within my lands, hardships shall they know, and my friends play me not false."

Rich gifts men bare then for the envoys; enow of these had Gunther to bestow, nor durst the men of Liudeger refuse them. When at last they took their leave, they parted hence in merry mood.

Now when the messengers were come to Denmark and King Liudegast had heard how they parted from the Rhine, as was told him, much he rued, in sooth, their proud defiance. The envoys said that Gunther had full many a valiant man-at-arms and among them they saw a warrior stand, whose name was Siegfried, a hero from Netherland. Little liked it Liudegast when he heard aright this tale. When the men of Denmark had heard these tidings told, they hasted all the more to call their friends; till Sir Liudegast had gathered for his journey full twenty thousand knights from among his valiant men. Then King Liudeger, also, of Saxon land, sent forth his summons, till they had forty thousand men and more, with whom they thought to ride to the Burgundian land.

Likewise at home King Gunther got him men-at-arms among his kin and the liegemen of his brothers, and among Hagen's men whom they wished to lead thence for battle. Much need of this the heroes had, but warriors soon must suffer death from this. Thus they made them ready for the journey. When they would hence, Folker, the daring, must bear the flag. In such wise they thought to ride from Worms across the Rhine. Hagen of Troneg was master of the troop; with them rode Sindolt and Hunolt, too, who wist well how to merit Gunther's gold. Dankwart, Hagen's brother, and Ortwin, too, well could they serve with honor in this war.

"Sir King," spake then Siegfried, "stay ye at home; since that your warriors are willed to follow me, remain ye with the ladies and keep your spirits high. I trow well to guard for you both honor and estate. Well will I bring it to pass that those who thought to seek you out at Worms upon the Rhine, had better far have stayed at home. We shall ride so nigh unto their land that their proud defiance shall be turned to fear."

From the Rhine they rode through Hesse with their warriors towards Saxon land, where they later fought. With fire and pillage, too, they harried all the countryside, so that the two kings did learn of it in dire distress. Then came they to the border; the warriors marched along. Siegfried, the strong, gan ask: "Who shall now guard here the troop?" Forsooth never did men ride more scathfully to the Saxons. They spake: "Let the valiant Dankwart guard the young upon the way, he is a doughty knight. Thus shall we lose the less through Liudeger's men. Let him and Ortwin guard the rear."

"Then I myself will ride," spake Siegfried, the knight, "and play the outlook toward the foe, until I discover aright where these warriors be." Quickly the son of fair Siegelind donned his harness. The troop he gave in charge to Hagen, when he would depart, and to Gernot, the valiant man. Thus he rode hence into the Saxon land alone and many a helmet band he cut to pieces on that day. Soon he spied the mighty host that lay encamped upon the plain and far outweighed the forces of his men. Forty thousand or better still there were. Full blithely Siegfried saw this in lofty mood. Meantime a warrior full well arrayed had mounted to the outlook 'gainst the foe. Him Sir Siegfried spied, and the bold man saw him, too. Each began to watch the other in hostile wise. Who it was, who stood on guard, I'll tell you now; a gleaming shield of gold lay by his hand. It was the good King Liudegast, who was guarding here his band. The noble stranger pricked along in lordly wise.

Now had Sir Liudegast espied him with hostile eye. Into the flanks of their horses they plunged the spurs; with all their might they couched the spears against the shields. At this great fear befell the mighty king. After the thrust the horses carried past each other the royal knights, as though borne upon the wind. With the bridles they wheeled in knightly wise and the two fierce champions encountered with their swords. Then smote Sir Siegfried, so that the whole field did ring. Through the hero's hand from out the helmets, as from firebrands, flew the bright red sparks. Each in the

other found his match. Sir Liudegast, too, struck many a savage blow; the might of each broke full upon the shields. Thirty of Liudegast's men stood there on guard, but ere they could come to his aid, Siegfried had won the fight, with three groat wounds which he dealt the king through his gleaming breastplate, the which was passing good. The blood from the wounds gushed forth along the edges of the sword, whereat King Liudegast stood in sorry mood. He begged for life and made offrance of his lands and said that his name was Liudegast. Then came his warrior's, who had witnessed what there had happened upon the lookout. As Siegfried would lead his captive thence, he was set upon by thirty of these men. With mighty blows the hero's hand guarded his noble prize. The stately knight then wrought worse scathe. In self-defense he did thirty unto death; only one he left alive, who rode full fast to tell the tale of what here had chanced. By his reddened helmet one might see the truth. It sorely grieved the men of Denmark, when the tale was told them that their king was taken captive. Men told it to his brother, who at the news began to rage with monstrous wrath, for great woe it brought him.

Liudegast, the warrior, then was led away by Siegfried's might to Gunther's men and given to Hagen in charge. When that they heard it was the king, full moderate was their dole. The Burgundians now were bidden raise their banner. "Up, men," cried Siegfried, "here shall more be done, ere the day end, and I lose not my life. Full many a stately dame in Saxon land shall rue this fight. Ye heroes from the Rhine, give heed to me, for I can guide you well to Liudeger's band. So shall ye see helmets carved by the hands of goodly knights; ere we turn again, they shall become acquaint with fear."

To their horses Gernot and all his men now hasted, and soon the stalwart minstrel, Sir Folker, grasped the battle-flag and rode before the band. Then were all the comrades arrayed in lordly wise for strife; nor had they more than a thousand men, and thereto Siegfried's twelve men-at-arms. Now from the road gan rise the dust, as across the land they rode; many a lordly shield was seen to gleam from out their midst. There, too, were come the Saxons with their troops and well-sharpened swords, as I since have heard. Sore cut these weapons in the heroes' hands, for they would fain guard both their castles and their land against the strangers. The lordings' marshals led on the troop. Siegfried, too, was come with his men-at-arms, whom he had brought from Netherland. In the storm of battle many a hand this day grew red with blood. Sindolt and Hunolt and Gernot, too, slew many a knight in the strife, ere these rightly knew the boldness of their foes. This many a stately dame must needs bewail. Folker and Hagen and Ortwin, too, dimmed in the battle the gleam of many a helm with flowing blood, these storm-bold men. By Dankwart, too, great deeds were done.

The men of Denmark proved well their hands; one heard many a shield resounding from the hurling and from the sharp swords as well, many of which were wielded there. The battle-bold Saxons did scathe enow, but when the men of Burgundy pressed to the fight, by them was really a wide wound carved. Then down across the saddles the blood was seen to flow. Thus they fought for honors, these knights both bold and good. Loud rang the sharp weapons in the heroes' hands, as those of Netherland followed their lording through the sturdy host. Valiantly they forced their way in Siegfried's wake, but not a knight from the Rhine was seen to follow. Through the shining helmets one could see flow the bloody stream, drawn forth by Siegfried's hand, till at last he found Liudeger before his men-at-arms. Thrice had he pierced the host from end to end. Now was Hagen come, who helped him achieve in the battle all his mind. Before them many a good knight must needs die this day.

When the mighty Liudeger espied Siegfried and saw that he bore high in hand the good sword Balmung and did slay so many a man, then waxed the lording wroth and fierce enow. A mighty surging and a mighty clang of swords arose, as their comrades pressed against each other. The two champions tried their prowess all the more. The troops began to yield; fierce grew the hate. To the ruler of the Saxons the tale was told that his brother had been captured; great dole this gave him. Well he knew it was the son of Siegelind who had done the deed. Men blamed Sir Ger-

not, but later he learned the truth.

So mighty were the blows of Liudeger that Siegfried's charger reeled beneath the saddle. When the steed recovered, bold Siegfried took on a frightful usance in the fray. In this Hagen helped him well, likewise Gernot, Dankwart, and Folker, too. Through them lay many dead. Likewise Sindolt and Hunolt and Ortwin, the knight, laid many low in strife; side by side in the fray the noble princes stood. One saw above the helmets many a spear, thrown by here's hand, hurtling through the gleaming shields. Blood-red was colored many a lordly buckler; many a man in the fierce conflict was unhorsed. At each other ran Siegfried, the brave, and Liudeger; shafts were seen to fly and many a keen-edged spear. Then off flew the shield-plates, struck by Siegfried's hand; the hero of Netherland thought to win the battle from the valiant Saxons, wondrous many of whom one saw. Ho! How many shining armor-rings the daring Dankwart broke!

Then Sir Liudegor espied a crown painted on the shield in Siegfried's hand. Well he knew that it was Siegfried, the mighty man. To his friends the hero loudly called: "Desist ye from the strife, my men, here I have seen the son of Siegmund, Siegfried, the strong, and recognized him well. The foul fiend himself hath sent him hither to the Saxon land." The banners bade he lower in the fight. Peace he craved, and this was later granted him, but he must needs go as hostage to Gunther's land. This was wrung from him by valiant Siegfried's hand. With one accord they then gave over the strife and laid aside the many riddled helmets and the broad, battered bucklers. Whatever of these was found, bore the hue of blood from the Burgundians' hand. They captured whom they would, for this lay in their power. Gernot and Hagen, the full bold warriors, bade bear away the wounded; five hundred stately men they led forth captive to the Rhine. The worsted knights rode back to Denmark, nor had the Saxons fought so well that one could give them ought of praise, and this the heroes rued full sore. The fallen, too, were greatly mourned by friends.

Then they bade place the weapons on sumpters for the Rhine. Siegfried, the warrior, and his heroes had wrought full well, as Gunther's men must needs confess. Sir Gernot now sent messengers homeward to Worms in his native land, and bade tell his kin what great success had happened to him and to his men, and how these daring knights had striven well for honor. The squirelings ran and told the tale. Then those who afore had sorrowed, were blithe for joy at the pleasing tidings that were come. Much questioning was heard from noble dames, how it had fared with the liegemen of the mighty king. One of the messengers they bade go to Kriemhild; this happened full secretly (openly she durst not), for she, too, had amongst them her own true love. When she saw the messenger coming to her bower, fair Kriemhild spake in kindly wise: "Now tell me glad news, I pray. And thou dost so without deceit, I will give thee of my gold and will ever be thy friend. How fared forth from the battle my brother Gernot and others of my kin? Are many of them dead perchance? Or who wrought there the best? This thou must tell me."

Quickly then the envoy spake: "Ne'er a coward did we have, but, to tell the truth, O noble queen, none rode so well to the strife and fray, as did the noble stranger from Netherland. Mickle wonders the hand of valiant Siegfried wrought. Whate'er the knights have done in strife, Dankwart and Hagen and other men of the king, however much they strove for honor, 'tis but as the wind compared with Siegfried, the son of Siegmund, the king. They slew full many a hero in the fray, but none might tell you of the wonders which Siegfried wrought, whenever he rode into the fight. Great woe he did the ladies through their kin; upon the field the love of many a dame lay dead. His blows were heard to ring so loud upon the helmets, that from the wounds they drew forth the blood in streams. In every knightly art he is a worthy knight and a brave. Whatever Ortwin of Metz achieved (and he whom he could reach with his good sword, fell sorely wounded, but mostly dead), yet your brother wrought the direst woe that could ever chance in battle. One must say of the chosen knights in truth, that these proud Burgundians acquitted them so well that they can well preserve their honor from every taint of shame. Through their hands we saw many a saddle bare, while the field resounded with the flashing swords. So well rode the warriors from the Rhine, that it

were better for their foes had it been avoided. The valiant men of Troneg, also, wrought dire woe, when in great numbers the armies met. Bold Hagen's hand did many a one to death; of this full many stories might be told here in the Burgundian land. Sindolt and Hunolt, Gernot's men, Rumolt the brave, have done such deeds that it may well ever rue Liudeger that he made war upon thy kinsmen by the Rhine. The very best fight that happened from first to last, that one has ever seen, was made full lustily by Siegfried's hand. Rich hostages he bringeth to Gunther's land. He won them by his prowess, this stately man. Of this King Liudegast must bear the loss and eke his brother Liudeger of Saxon land. Now listen to my tale, most noble queen: by the hand of Siegfried the twain were caught. Never have men brought so many hostages to this land, as now are coming to the Rhine through him. Men are bringing to our land five hundred or more unharmed captives; and of the deadly wounded, my lady, know, not less than eighty blood-red biers. These men were mostly wounded by bold Siegfried's hand. Those who in haughty pride sent a challenge to the Rhine, must now needs be the captives of Gunther, the king, and men are bringing them with joy unto this land."

Still higher rose Kriemhild's color when she heard this tale. Her fair face blushed a rosy red, that Siegfried, the youth, the stately knight, had fared forth so joyfully from the dangerous strife. These tidings could not have pleased her better. For her kinsmen, too, she rejoiced in duty bound. Then spake the lovely maid: "A fair tale thou hast told me; therefore shalt thou have as guerdon rich attire. Likewise I'll have thee brought ten marks of gold." Small wonder that such tales are gladly told to noble dames.

They gave him then his guerdon, the garments and the gold. Then many a fair maid hied her to the casement and gazed upon the street, where many high-mettled warriors were seen riding into the Burgundian land. There came the champions, the wounded and the sound. Without shame they heard the greetings of their friends. Merrily the host rode forth to meet his guests, for his great sorrow had been turned to joy. Well greeted he his vassals and the strangers, too; for it was only meet that the mighty king in courtly wise should thank those who were come back to him, because in the storm of battle they had won the fight with honor. Gunther bade his kinsmen tell who had been slain upon the march; but sixty had been lost, whom one must mourn, as is the wont with heroes. Many a riven shield and battered helm the unharmed warriors brought to Gunther's land. The men alighted from their steeds before the palace of the king. Loud was heard the joyous sound of the merry welcome; then order was given to lodge the warriors in the town. The king bade minister well unto his guests, attend the wounded and give them good easement. His courtesie was cleverly seen upon his foes. He spake to Liudegast: "Now be ye welcome. Much damage have I ta'en because of you; for this I shall now be repaid, if fortune favor. God reward my kinsmen, for they have given me joy."

"Well may ye thank them," answered Liudeger; "such noble hostages hath king never gained afore. For fair treatment we offer great store of wealth, that ye may act with mercy towards your foes."

"I will let you both go free," spake Gunther, "but I must have surety that my foes remain here with me, that they do not leave the land against my will." To that Liudeger pledged his hand.

Men brought them to their lodgings and gave them easement. The wounded were bedded well, and for the sound were poured out good mead and wine. Never could the comrades have been more merry. Their battered shields were borne away for keeping, and enow there was of bloody saddles which one bade hide away, that the ladies might not weep. Many a good knight returned aweary from the fray. The king did make his guests great cheer. His lands were full of strangers and of home-folk. He bade ease the sorely wounded in kindly wise; their haughty pride was now laid low. Men offered to the leeches rich rewards, silver without weight and thereto shining gold, if they would heal the heroes from the stress of war. To his guests the king likewise gave great gifts. Those that were minded to set out for home, were asked to stay, as one doth to friends. The king bethought him how he might requite his men, for they had brought to pass his wish for fame and honor.

Then spake Lord Gernot: "Let them ride away, but be it made known to them that in six weeks they must come again for a mighty feast. By then will many a one be healed who now lieth sorely wounded."

Then Siegfried of Netherland also asked for leave, but when King Gunther learned his wish, lovingly he bade him stay erstwhile. Were it not for the king's sister, this were never done. He was too rich to take reward, though he well deserved it and the king liked him well, as also did the kinsmen, who had seen what happened in battle through his strength. For the sake of one fair lady he thought to stay, if perchance he might espy her. Later it was done, and according to his wish he met the maid. He rode thereafter joyfully to Siegmund's land.

At all times the host bade practice knighthood, and many a youthful knight did this right gladly. Meanwhile he ordered seats prepared upon the sand before the town of Worms for those who were to visit him in the Burgundian land. At the time when they should come, fair Kriemhild heard it said that the king would hold a feasting for the sake of his dear friends. Then comely women hastened apace with robes and headgear which they were to don. The noble Uta heard tales told of the proud warriors who were to come. Then many rich dresses were taken from the press. To please her children she bade make garments ready, that many ladies and many maids might therewith be decked and many youthful knights of the Burgundian land. Also for many of the strangers she bade fashion lordly robes.

ADVENTURE V. How Siegfried First Saw Kriemhild.

One saw daily riding to the Rhine those who would fain be at the feasting. Full many of these who for the king's sake were come into the land, were given steeds and lordly harness. Seats were prepared for all, for the highest and the best, as we are told, for two and thirty princes at the feast. For this, too, the fair ladies vied in their attire. Giseller, the youth, was aught but idle; he and Gernot and all their men received the friends and strangers. In truth, they gave the knights right courtly greetings. These brought into the land many a saddle of golden red, dainty shields and lordly armor to the feasting on the Rhine. Many a wounded man was seen full merry since. Even those who lay abed in stress of wounds, must needs forget the bitterness of death. Men ceased to mourn for the weak and sick and joyed in prospect of the festal day, and how well they would fare at the feasting of the king. Pleasure without stint and overabundance of joy pervaded all the folk which there were seen. Therefore great rejoicing arose throughout the whole of Gunther's land.

Upon a Whitsun morning five thousand or more brave men, clad in glad attire, were seen going forth to the high festal tide. On all sides they vied with each other in knightly sports. The host marked well, what he already knew, how from his very heart the hero of Netherland did love his sister, albeit he had never seen her, whose comeliness men praised above all maids. Then spake the knight Ortwin to the king: "Would ye have full honor at your feast, so should ye let be seen the charming maids, who live in such high honors here in Burgundy. What were the joy of man, what else could give him pleasure, but pretty maids and noble dames? Pray let your sister go forth before the guests." To the joy of many a hero was this counsel given.

"This will I gladly do," spake then the king, and all who heard it were merry at the thought. Then bade he say to the Lady Uta and her comely daughter, that with their maidens they should come to court. From the presses they took fair raiment and whatso of rich attire was laid away. Of rings and ribbons, too, enow they had. Thus each stately maiden decked herself with zeal. Full many a youthful knight upon that day was of the mind that he was so fair to look upon for ladies, that he would not exchange this chance for the lands of any mighty king. Gladly they gazed on those whom till now they had not known. Then bade the mighty king full a hundred of his men, who were his kin and hers, escort his sister and serve her thus. These were the court retainers of the Burgundian land and carried swords in hand. Soon one saw the noble Uta coming with her child. Full hundred or more fair ladies had she

taken for her train, who wore rich robes. Likewise there followed her daughter many a stately maid. When from out a bower men saw them come, there rose a mighty press of knights who had the hope, if that might be, to gaze with joy upon the noble maid. Now came she forth, the lovely fair, as doth the red of dawn from out the lowering clouds. He then was reft of many woes who bore her in his heart so long a time, when he saw the lovely maid stand forth so glorious. How shone full many a precious stone upon her robes! In lovely wise her rose-red hue appeared. Whatever one might wish, he could not but confess that never in the world had he beheld a fairer maid. As the radiant moon, whose sheen is thrown so brightly on the clouds, doth stand before the stars, so stood she now before full many a stately dame. Therefore higher rose the spirits of the comely knights. Richly appareled chamberlains marched on in front, while the high-mettled warriors forth must press where they might see the lovely maid. At this Lord Siegfried felt both joy and dole. To himself he thought: "How could that chance, that I should love thee? That is a foolish dream. But if I now must lose thee, then were I better dead." At thought of this his color came and went. There stood the son of Siegmund in such dainty grace, as he were limned on parchment by skillful master's art. Indeed 'twas said of him that never had so fair a knight been seen. The escort of the ladies now bade everywhere give way and many a man obeyed. These high-born hearts rejoiced full many a wight, as thus so many a noble dame appeared in courtly bearing.

Then spake Lord Gernot of Burgundy: "Dear brother Gunther, him who offered service in such kindly wise, ye should in like manner requite before these knights; nor shall I ever rue this counsel. Bid Siegfried now approach my sister, that the maid may greet him; this will ever be our gain. She who never greeted warrior shall greet him fair, that by this means we now may win the stately knight."

Then went the kinsmen of the host to fetch the hero. To the champion from Netherland they spake: "You hath the king permitted to go to court; his sister is to greet you. This hath he decreed to do you honor."

At this the lord grew blithe of mood, for in his heart he bare joy without alloy, that he thus should see fair Uta's child. With lovely grace she greeted Siegfried then, but when she saw the haughty knight stand thus before her, her cheeks flamed bright. "Be welcome, Sir Siegfried, most good and noble knight," the fair maid spake, and at this greeting his spirits mounted high. Courteously he made obeisance; she took him by the hand. How gallantly he walked by the lady's side! Upon each other this lord and lady gazed with kindling eyes. Full secretly this happened. Was perchance a white hand there fervently pressed by heart-felt love? That know I not; yet I cannot believe that this was left undone, for soon had she betrayed to him her love. Nevermore in summertime nor in the days of May bare he within his heart such lofty joy as now he gained, when hand in hand he walked with her whom he fain would call his love.

Then thought full many a knight: "Had that but happened to me, to walk thus with her hand in hand, as now I see him do, or to lie beside her, I'd bear it willingly."

Never has warrior better served to gain a queen. From whatever land the guests were come, all gazed alike upon this pair alone. She then was bidden kiss the stately man, to whom no such delight had ever happened in this world.

Then spake the king of Denmark: "Because of this high greeting many a warrior lieth wounded (this wot I well), through Siegfried's hand. God grant that he may never come again to my kingly lands."

On all sides they bade make way for Kriemhild, as thus to church one saw her go with many a valiant knight in courtly wise. Then soon the stately knight was parted from her side. Thus went she to the minster, followed by many a dame. So full of graces was this queenly maid that many a daring wish must needs be lost. Born she was to be the eyes' delight of many a knight. Siegfried scarce could wait till mass was sung. Well might he think his fortune that she did favor him, whom thus he bare in heart. Cause enow he had to love the fair.

When she came forth from out the minster, they begged the gallant knight again to bear her company, as he had done afore. Then first the lovely maid began to thank him that he had fought so gloriously before so many knights. "Now God requite you, Sir Siegfried," spake the comely maid, "that ye have brought to pass with your service, that the warriors do love you with such fealty as I hear them say."

Then upon Dame Kriemhild he began to gaze in loving wise. "I will serve them ever," spake then the knight, "and while life shall last, never will I lay my head to rest till I have done their will; and this I do, my Lady Kriemhild, to win your love."

A twelfth-night long, on each and every day, one saw the winsome maid beside the knight, when she should go to court to meet her kin. This service was done from sheer delight. A great rout of joy and pleasure was daily seen in front of Gunther's hall, without and eke within, from many a daring man. Ortwin and Hagen began to do great marvels. Whatever any wished to play, these lusty knights were fully ready; thus they became well known to all the guests and so the whole of Gunther's land was decked with honor. Those who had lain wounded were now seen coming forth; they, too, would fain have pastime with the troop and guard themselves with bucklers and hurl the shaft. Enow there were to help them, for there was great store of men.

At the feasting the host bade purvey them with the best of cheer. He kept him free from every form of blame that might befall a king; men saw him move in friendly wise among his guests. He spake: "Ye worthy knights, ere ye go hence, pray take my gifts. I am minded to deserve it of you ever. Do not disdain my goods, the which I'll share with you, as I have great desire."

Then up spake they of Denmark: "Ere we ride homeward to our land, we crave a lasting peace; we knights have need thereof, for many a one of our kinsmen lieth dead at the hands of your men-at-arms."

Liudegast, the Saxon chief, was now cured of his wounds and had recovered from the fray, though many dead they left within this land. Then King Gunther went to find Sir Siegfried; to the knight he spake: "Now tell me what to do. Our foes would fain ride early and beg for lasting peace of me and of my men. Advise me now, Knight Siegfried, what thinketh thee good to do? What the lordings offer me will I tell thee; what of gold five hundred steeds can bear, that would they gladly give me, and I set them free again."

Then spake the mighty Siegfried: "That were done but ill. Let them ride hence unhindered, but make each of the lordings give surety with his hand, that their noble knights henceforth forbear all hostile riding hither to your land."

"This counsel will I follow," Herewith they parted, and to the king's foes was told that no one craved the gold they proffered. For their loved friends at home the battle-weary warriors longed. Many a shield full of treasure was then brought forth which the king dealt out unweighed to his many friends, to each five hundred marks of gold, and to a few, still more. Gernot, the brave, had counseled Gunther this. Then they all took leave, sith they would hence. One saw the guests draw nigh to Kriemhild and also to where Dame Uta sate. Never yet were knights dismissed in better wise. Lodgings grew empty as they rode away, but still there stayed at home the king and all his kin and many a noble liegeman. Daily they were seen as they went to Lady Kriemhild. The good knight Siegfried now would likewise take his leave; he weened not to win that on which his mind was set. The king heard said that he would hence, but Giseler, the youth, quite won him from the journey.

"Whither would ye ride now, noble Siegfried? Pray tarry with the knights, I beg you, with Gunther the king and with his men. Here, too, are many comely dames whom we shall gladly let you see."

Then spake the mighty Siegfried: "Let stand the steeds. I listed to ride hence, but now will I desist. The shields, too, bear away. To my land I craved to go, in truth, but Giseler with his great love hath turned me from it."

So the valiant knight stayed on to please his friends, nor could he have fared more gentilly in any land. This happened because he daily saw Kriemhild, the fair; for the sake of her unmeasured

beauty the lording stayed. With many a pastime they whiled the hours away, but still her love constrained him and often gave him dole. Because of this same love in later days the valiant knight lay pitiful in death.

ADVENTURE VI. How Gunther Fared To Isenland for Brunhild.

New tidings came across the Rhine. 'Twas said that yonder many a fair maid dwelt. The good king Gunther thought to win him one of these; high therefore rose the warrior's spirits. There lived a queen beyond the sea, whose like men knew not anywhere. Peerless was her beauty and great her strength. With doughty knights she shot the shaft for love. The stone she hurled afar and sprang far after it. He who craved her love must win without fail three games from this high-born dame. When the noble maid had done this passing off, a stately knight did hear it by the Rhine. He turned his thoughts upon this comely dame, and so heroes must needs later lose their lives.

One day when the king and his vassals sate and pondered to and fro in many a wise, whom their lord might take to wife, who would be fit to be their lady and beseem the land, up spake the lord of the Rhinelands: "I will go down to the sea and hence to Brunhild, however it may go with me. For her love I'll risk my life. I will gladly lose it and she become not my wife."

"Against that do I counsel you," spake then Siegfried, "if, as ye say, the queen doth have so fierce a wont, he who wooeth for her love will pay full dear. Therefore should ye give over the journey."

Then spake King Gunther: "Never was woman born so strong and bold that I might not vanquish her with mine own hand."

"Be still," spake Siegfried, "ye little know her strength."

"So will I advise you," spake Hagen then, "that ye beg Siegfried to share with you this heavy task. This is my rede, sith he doth know so well how matters stand with Brunhild."

The king spake: "Wilt thou help me, noble Siegfried, to woo this lovely maid? And thou doest what I pray thee and this comely dame become my love, for thy sake will I risk both life and honor."

To this Siegfried, the son of Siegmund, answered: "I will do it, and thou give me thy sister Kriemhild, the noble queen. For my pains I ask no other meed."

"I'll pledge that, Siegfried, in thy hand," spake then Gunther, "and if fair Brunhild come hither to this land, I'll give thee my sister unto wife. Then canst thou live ever merrily with the fair."

This the noble warriors swore oaths to do, and so the greater grew their hardships, till they brought the lady to the Rhine. On this account these brave men must later be in passing danger. Siegfried had to take with him hence the cloak which he, the bold hero, had won 'mid dangers from a dwarf, Alberich he hight. These bold and mighty knights now made them ready for the journey. When Siegfried wore the Cloak of Darkness he had strength enow: the force of full twelve men beside his own. With cunning arts he won the royal maid. This cloak was fashioned so, that whatsoever any wrought within it, none saw him. Thus he won Brunhild, which brought him dole.

"Now tell me, good Knight Siegfried, before our trip begin, shall we not take warriors with us into Brunhild's land, that we may come with passing honors to the sea? Thirty thousand men-at-arms can soon be called."

"However many men we take," quoth Siegfried, "the queen doth use so fierce a wont that they must perish through her haughty pride. I'll give thee better counsel, O brave and worthy king. Let us fare as wandering knights adown the Rhine, and I will tell thee those that shall be of the band. In all four knights, we'll journey to the sea and thus we'll woo the lady, whatever be our fate thereafter. I shall be one of the four comrades, the second thou shalt be. Let Hagen be the third (then have we hope of life), Dankwart then the fourth, the valiant man. A thousand others durst not match us in the fight."

"Gladly would I know," spake then the king, "ere we go hence ('t would please me much), what garments we should wear before Brunhild, which would beseem us there. Pray tell this now to Gunther."

"Weeds of the very best which can be found are worn all times in Brunhild's land. We must wear rich clothes before the lady, that we feel no shame when men shall hear the tidings told."

The good knight spake: "Then will I go myself to my dear mother, if perchance I can bring it to pass that her fair maids purvey us garments which we may wear with honor before the high-born maid."

Hagen of Troneg spake then in lordly wise: "Wherefore will ye pray your mother of such service? Let your sister hear what ye have in mind, and she'll purvey you well for your journey to Brunhild's court."

Then sent he word to his sister, that he would fain see her, and Knight Siegfried, too, sent word. Ere this happed the fair had clad her passing well. That these brave men were coming, gave her little grief. Now were her attendants, too, arrayed in seemly wise. The lordings came, and when she heard the tale, from her seat she rose and walked in courtly wise to greet the noble stranger and her brother, too.

"Welcome be my brother and his comrade. I'd gladly know," so spake the maid, "what ye lords desire, sith ye be thus come to court. Pray let me hear how it standeth with you noble knights."

Then spake king Gunther: "My lady, I'll tell you now. Maugre our lofty mood, yet have we mickle care. We would ride a-wooing far into foreign lands, and for this journey we have need of costly robes."

"Now sit you down, dear brother," spake the royal maid, "and let me hear aright who these ladies be whom ye fain would woo in the lands of other kings."

By the hand the lady took the chosen knights and with the twain she walked to where she sate afore upon a couch, worked, as well I wot, with dainty figures embossed in gold. There might they have fair pastime with the ladies. Friendly glances and kindly looks passed now full oft between the twain. In his heart he bare her, she was dear to him as life. In after days fair Kriemhild became strong Siegfried's wife.

Then spake the mighty king: "Dear sister mine, without thy help it may not be. We would go for knightly pastime to Brunhild's land, and have need of princely garb to wear before the dames."

Then the noble maiden answered: "Dear brother mine, I do you now to wit, that whatever need ye have of help of mine, that stand I ready to give. Should any deny you aught, 't would please Kriemhild but ill. Most noble knights, beseech me not with such concern, but order me with lordly air to do whatso ye list. I stand at your bidding and will do it with a will." So spake the winsome maid.

"We would fain, dear sister, wear good attire, and this your noble hand shall help to choose. Your maidens then must make it fit us, for there be no help against this journey." Then spake the princess: "Now mark ye what I say. Silks I have myself; see ye that men do bring us jewels upon the shields and thus we'll work the clothes. Gunther and Siegfried, too, gave glad assent.

"Who are the comrades," spake the queen, "who shall fare with you thus clad to court?"

He spake: "I shall be one of four. My liegemen twain, Dankwart and Hagen, shall go with me to court. Now mark ye well, my lady, what I say. Each of us four must have to wear for four whole days three changes of apparel and such goodly trappings that without shame we may quit Brunhild's land."

In fitting wise the lords took leave and parted hence. Kriemhild, the queen, bade thirty of her maidens who were skillful in such work, come forth from out their bowers. Silks of Araby, white as snow, and the fair silk of Zazamanc, green as is the clover, they overlaid with precious stones; that gave garments passing fair. Kriemhild herself, the high-born maiden, cut them out. Whatso they had at hand of well-wrought linings from the skin of foreign fish, but rarely seen of folk, they covered now with silk, as was the wont to wear. Now hear great marvels of these shining weeds. From the kingdom of Morocco and from Libya, too, they had great store of the fairest silks which the kith of any king did ever win. Kriemhild made it well appear what love she bore the twain. Sith upon the proud journey they had set their minds, they deemed ermine to be well fit. Upon this lay fine silk as black as coal. This would still besem all doughty knights at high festal

tides. From out a setting of Arabian gold there shone forth many a stone. The ladies' zeal, it was not small, forsooth; in seven weeks they wrought the robes. Ready, too, were the weapons for the right good knights.

When now they all stood dight, there was built for them in haste upon the Rhine a sturdy little skiff, that should bear them downward to the sea. Weary were the noble maids from all their cares. Then the warriors were told that the brave vestures they should wear were now prepared; as they had craved it, so it now was done. Then no longer would they tarry on the Rhine; they sent a message to their war-companions, if perchance they should care to view their new attire, to see if it be too long or short. All was found in fitting measure, and for this they gave the ladies thanks. All who saw them could not but aver that never in the world had they seen attire more fair. Therefore they wore it gladly at the court. None wist how to tell of better knightly weeds. Nor did they fail to give great thanks. Then the lusty knights craved leave to go, and this the lordings did in courtly wise. Bright eyes grew dim and moist thereat from weeping.

Kriemhild spake: "Dear brother, ye might better tarry here a while and pay court to other dames, where ye would not so risk your life; then would I say well done. Ye might find nearer home a wife of as high a birth."

I ween their hearts did tell them what would hap. All wept alike, no matter what men said. The gold upon their breasts was tarnished by their tears, which thick and fast coursed downward from their eyes.

She spake: "Sir Siegfried, let this dear brother of mine be commended to your fealty and troth, that naught may harm him in Brunhild's land." This the full brave knight vowed in Lady Kriemhild's hand.

The mighty warrior spake: "If I lose not my life, ye may be free from every care, my lady. I'll bring him to you sound again hither to the Rhine; that know of a surety." The fair maid bowed her thanks.

Men bare their gold-hued shields out to them upon the sands and brought them all their harness. One bade lead up the steeds, for they would ride away. Much weeping then was done by comely dames. The winsome maids stood at the easements. A high wind stirred the ship and sails; the proud war fellowship embarked upon the Rhine.

Then spake King Gunther: "Who shall be the captain of the ship?"

"That will I," quoth Siegfried, "I wot well how to steer you on the flood. That know, good knights, the right water ways be well known to me."

So they parted merrily from out the Burgundian land. Siegfried quickly grasped an oar and from the shore the stalwart man gan push. Bold Gunther took the helm himself, and thus the worshipful and speedy knights set forth from land. With them they took rich food and eke good wine, the best that could be found along the Rhine. Their steeds stood fair; they had good easement. Their ship rode well; scant harm did hap them. Their stout sheet-rope was tightened by the breeze. Twenty leagues they sailed, or ever came the night, with a good wind, downward toward the sea. These hard toils later brought the high-mettled warriors pain.

Upon the twelfth-day morning, as we hear say, the winds had borne them far away to Isenstein in Brunhild's land. To none save Siegfried was this known; but when King Gunther spied so many castles and broad marches, too, how soon he spake: "Pray tell me, friend Siegfried, is it known to you whose are these castles and this lordly land?"

Siegfried answered: "I know it well. It is the land and folk of Brunhild and the fortress Isenstein, as ye heard me say. Fair ladies ye may still see there to-day. Methinketh good to advise you heroes that ye be of one single mind, and that ye tell the selfsame tale. For if we go to-day before Brunhild, in much jeopardy must we stand before the queen. When we behold the lovely maiden with her train, then, ye far-famed heroes, must ye tell but this single tale: that Gunther be my master and I his man; then what he craveth will come to pass." Full ready they were for whatever he bade them vow, nor because of pride did any one abstain. They

promised what he would; wherefrom they all fared well, when King Gunther saw fair Brunhild.

"Forsooth I vow it less for thy sake than for thy sister's, the comely maid, who is to me as mine own soul and body. Gladly will I bring it to pass, that she become my wife."

ADVENTURE VII. How Gunther Won Brunhild.

Meanwhile their bark had come so near the castle that the king saw many a comely maiden standing at the casements. Much it irked King Gunther that he knew them not. He asked his comrade Siegfried: "Hast thou no knowledge of these maidens, who yonder are gazing downward towards us on the flood? Whoever be their lord, they are of lofty mood."

At this Sir Siegfried spake: "I pray you, spy secretly among the high-born maids and tell me then whom ye would choose, and ye had the power"

"That will I," spake Gunther, the bold and valiant knight. "In yonder window do I see one stand in snow-white weeds. She is fashioned so fair that mine eyes would choose her for her comeliness. Had I power, she should become my wife."

"Right well thine eyes have chosen for thee. It is the noble Brunhild, the comely maid, for whom thy heart doth strive and eke thy mind and mood." All her bearing seemed to Gunther good.

When bade the queen her high-born maids go from the windows, for it behooved them not to be the mark of strangers' eyes. Each one obeyed. What next the ladies did, hath been told us since. They decked their persons out to meet the unknown knights, a way fair maids have ever had. To the narrow casements they came again, where they had seen the knights. Through love of gazing this was done.

But four there were that were come to land. Through the windows the stately women saw how Siegfried led a horse out on the sand, whereby King Gunther felt himself much honored. By the bridle he held the steed, so stately, good and fair, and large and strong, until King Gunther had sat him in the saddle. Thus Siegfried served him, the which he later quite forgot. Such service he had seldom done afore, that he should stand at any here's stirrup. Then he led his own steed from the ship. All this the comely dames of noble birth saw through the casements. The steeds and garments, too, of the lusty knights, of snow-white hue, were right well matched and all alike; the bucklers, fashioned well, gleamed in the hands of the stately men. In lordly wise they rode to Brunhild's hall, their saddles set with precious stones, with narrow martingales, from which hung bells of bright and ruddy gold. So they came to the land, as well befitted their prowess, with newly sharpened spears, with well-wrought swords, the which hung down to the spurs of these stately men. The swords the bold men bore were sharp and broad. All this Brunhild, the high-born maid, espied.

With the king came Dankwart and Hagen, too. We have heard tales told of how the knights wore costly raiment, raven black of hue. Fair were their bucklers, mickle, good and broad. Jewels they wore from the land of India, the which gleamed gloriously upon their weeds. By the flood they left their skiff without a guard. Thus the brave knights and good rode to the castle. Six and eighty towers they saw within, three broad palaces, and one hall well wrought of costly marble, green as grass, wherein Brunhild herself sate with her courtiers. The castle was unlocked and the gates flung wide. Then ran Brunhild's men to meet them and welcomed the strangers into their mistress' land. One bade relieve them of their steeds and shields.

Then spake a chamberlain: "Pray give us now your swords and your shining breastplates, too."

"That we may not grant you," said Hagen of Troneg; "we ourselves will bear them."

Then gan Siegfried tell aright the tale. "The usage of the castle, let me say, is such that no guests may here bear arms. Let them now be taken hence, then will all be well."

Unwillingly Hagen, Gunther's man, obeyed. For the strangers men bade pour out wine and make their lodgings ready. Many

doughty knights were seen walking everywhere at court in lordly weeds. Mickle and oft were these heroes gazed upon.

Then the tidings were told to Lady Brunhild, that unknown warriors were come in lordly raiment, sailing on the flood. The fair and worthy maid gan ask concerning this. "Pray let me hear," spake the queen, "who be these unknown knights, who stand so lordly in my castle, and for whose sake the heroes have journeyed hither?"

Then spake one of the courtiers: "My lady, I can well say that never have I set eyes on any of them, but one like Siegfried doth stand among them. Him ye should give fair greetings; that is my rede, in truth. The second of their fellowship is so worthy of praise that he were easily a mighty king over broad and princely lands, and he had the power and might possess them. One doth see him stand by the rest in such right lordly wise. The third of the fellowship is so fierce and yet withal so fair of body, most noble queen. By the fierce glances he so oft doth east, I ween he be grim of thought and mood. The youngest among them is worshipful indeed. I see the noble knight stand so charmingly, with courtly bearing, in almost maiden modesty. We might all have cause for fear, had any done him aught. However blithely he doth practice chivalry, and howso fair of body he be, yet might he well make many a comely woman weep, should he e'er grow angry. He is so fashioned that in all knightly virtues he must be a bold knight and a brave."

Then spake the queen: "Now bring me my attire. If the mighty Siegfried be come unto this land through love of mine, he doth risk his life. I fear him not so sore, that I should become his wife."

Brunhild, the fair, was soon well clad. Then went there with her many a comely maid, full hundred or more, decked out in gay attire. The stately dames would gaze upon the strangers. With them there walked good knights from Isenland, Brunhild's men-at-arms, five hundred or more, who bore swords in hand. This the strangers rued. From their seats then the brave and lusty heroes rose. When that the queen spied Siegfried, now hear what the maid did speak.

"Be ye welcome, Siegfried, here in this our land! What doth your journey mean? That I fain would know."

"Gramercy, my Lady Brunhild, that ye have deigned to greet me, most generous queen, in the presence of this noble knight who standeth here before me, for he is my liege lord. This honor I must needs forswear. By birth he's from the Rhine; what more need I to say? For thy sake are we come hither. Fain would he woo thee, however he fare. Methink thee now betimes, my lord will not let thee go. He is hight Gunther and is a lordly king. An' he win thy love, he doth crave naught more. Forsooth this knight, so well beseen, did bid me journey hither. I would fain have given it over, could I have said him nay."

She spake: "Is he thy liege and thou his man, dare he assay the games which I mete out and gain the mastery, then I'll become his wife; but should I win, 't will cost you all your lives."

Then up spake Hagen of Troneg: "My lady, let us see your mighty games. It must indeed go hard, or ever Gunther, my lord, give you the palm. He troweth well to win so fair a maid."

"He must hurl the stone and after spring and cast the spear with me. Be ye not too hasty. Ye are like to lose here your honor and your life as well. Bethink you therefore rightly," spake the lovely maid.

Siegfried, the bold, went to the king and bade him tell the queen all that he had in mind, he should have no fear. "I'll guard you well against her with my arts."

Then spake King Gunther: "Most noble queen, now mete out whatso ye list, and were it more, that would I all endure for your sweet sake. I'll gladly lose my head, and ye become not my wife."

When the queen heard this speech, she begged them hasten to the games, as was but meet. She bade purvey her with good armor for the strife: a breastplate of ruddy gold and a right good shield. A silken surcoat, too, the maid put on, which sword had never cut in any fray, of silken cloth of Libya. Well was it wrought. Bright embroidered edging was seen to shine thereon.

Meanwhile the knights were threatened much with battle cries. Dankwart and Hagen stood ill at ease; their minds were troubled

at the thought of how the king would speed. Thought they: "Our journey will not bring us warriors aught of good."

Meanwhile Siegfried, the stately man, or ever any marked it, had hied him to the ship, where he found his magic cloak concealed. Into it he quickly slipped and so was seen of none. He hurried back and there he found a great press of knights, where the queen dealt out her lofty games. Thither he went in secret wise (by his arts it happened), nor was he seen of any that were there. The ring had been marked out, where the games should be, afore many valiant warriors, who were to view them there. More than seven hundred were seen bearing arms, who were to say who won the game.

Then was come Brunhild, armed as though she would battle for all royal lands. Above her silken coat she wore many a bar of gold; gloriously her lovely color shone beneath the armor. Then came her courtiers, who bare along a shield of ruddy gold with large broad strips as hard as steel, beneath the which the lovely maid would fight. As shield-thong there served a costly band upon which lay jewels green as grass. It shone and gleamed against the gold. He must needs be passing bold, to whom the maid would show her love. The shield the maid should bear was three spans thick beneath the studs, as we are told. Rich enow it was, of steel and eke of gold, the which four chamberlains could scarcely carry.

When the stalwart Hagen saw the shield borne forth, the knight of Troneg spake full grim of mood: "How now, King Gunther? How we shall lose our lives! She you would make your love is the devil's bride, in truth."

Hear now about her weeds; enow of these she had; she wore a surcoat of silk of Azagoue, noble and costly. Many a lordly stone shone in contrast to its color on the person of the queen.

Then was brought forth for the lady a spear, sharp, heavy, and large, the which she cast all time, stout and unwieldy, mickle and broad, which on its edges cut most fearfully. Of the spear's great weight hear wonders told. Three and one half weights of iron were wrought therein, the which scarce three of Brunhild's men could bear. The noble Gunther can be sore afraid. Within his heart he thought: "What doth this mean? How could the devil from hell himself escape alive? Were I safe and sound in Burgundy, long might she live here free of any love of mine."

Then spake Hagen's brother, the valiant Dankwart: "The journey to this court doth rue me sore. We who have ever borne the name of knights, how must we lose our lives! Shall we now perish at the hands of women in these lands? It doth irk me much, that ever I came unto this country. Had but my brother Hagen his sword in hand, and I mine, too, then should Brunhild's men go softly in their overweening pride. This know for sure, they'd guard against it well. And had I sworn a peace with a thousand oaths, before I'd see my dear lord die, the comely maid herself should lose her life."

"We might leave this land unscathed," spake then his brother Hagen, "had we the harness which we sorely need and our good swords as well; then would the pride of this strong dame become a deal more soft."

What the warrior spake the noble maid heard well. Over her shoulders she gazed with smiling mouth. "Now sith he thinketh himself so brave, bring them forth their coats-of-mail; put in the warriors' hands their sharp-edged swords."

When they received their weapons as the maiden bade, bold Dankwart blushed for very joy. "Now let them play whatso they list," spake the doughty man. "Gunther is unconquered, since now we have our arms."

Mightily now did Brunhild's strength appear. Into the ring men bare a heavy stone, huge and great, mickle and round. Twelve brave and valiant men-at-arms could scarcely bear it. This she threw at all times, when she had shot the spear. The Burgundians' fear now grew amain.

"Woe is me," cried Hagen. "Whom hath King Gunther chosen for a love? Certes she should be the foul fiend's bride in hell"

Upon her fair white arm the maid turned back her sleeves; with her hands she grasped the shield and poised the spear on high. Thus the strife began. Gunther and Siegfried feared Brunhild's hate, and had Siegfried not come to Gunther's aid, she would have bereft the king of life. Secretly Siegfried went and touched

his hand; with great fear Gunther marked his wiles. "Who hath touched me?" thought the valiant man. Then he gazed around on every side, but saw none standing there.

"'Tis I, Siegfried, the dear friend of thine. Thou must not fear the queen. Give me the shield from off thy hand and let me bear it and mark aright what thou dost hear me say. Make thou the motions, I will do the deeds."

When Gunther knew that it was Siegfried, he was overjoyed.

Quoth Siegfried: "Now hide thou my arts; tell them not to any man; then can the queen win from thee little fame, albeit she doth desire it. See how fearlessly the lady standeth now before thee."

Then with might and main the noble maiden hurled the spear at a shield, mickle, new, and broad, which the son of Siegelind bore upon his arm. The sparks sprang from the steel, as if the wind did blow. The edge of the mighty spear broke fully through the shield, so that men saw the fire flame forth from the armor rings. The stalwart men both staggered at the blow; but for the Cloak of Darkness they had lain there dead. From the mouth of Siegfried, the brave, gushed forth the blood. Quickly the good knight sprang back again and snatched the spear that she had driven through his shield. Stout Siegfried's hand now sent it back again. He thought: "I will not pierce the comely maid." So he reversed the point and cast it at her armor with the butt, that it rang out loudly from his mighty hand. The sparks flew from the armor rings, as though driven by the wind. Siegmund's son had made the throw with might. With all her strength she could not stand before the blow. In faith King Gunther never could have done the deed.

Brunhild, the fair, how quickly up she sprang! "Gunther, noble knight, I cry you mercy for the shot." She weened that he had done it with his strength. To her had crept a far more powerful man. Then went she quickly, angry was her mood. The noble maid and good raised high the stone and hurled it mightily far from her hand. After the cast she sprang, that all her armor rang, in truth. The stone had fallen twelve fathoms hence, but with her leap the comely maid out-sprang the throw. Then went Sir Siegfried to where lay the stone. Gunther poised it, while the hero made the throw. Siegfried was bold, strong, and tall; he threw the stone still further and made a broader jump. Through his fair arts he had strength enow to bear King Gunther with him as he sprang. The leap was made, the stone lay on the ground; men saw none other save Gunther, the knight, alone. Siegfried had banished the fear of King Gunther's death. Brunhild, the fair, waxed red with wrath. To her courtiers she spake a deal too loud, when she spied the hero safe and sound at the border of the ring: "Come nearer quickly, ye kinsmen and liegemen of mine, ye must now be subject to Gunther, the king."

Then the brave knights laid aside their arms and paid their homage at the feet of mighty Gunther from the Burgundian land. They weened that he had won the games by his own strength alone. He greeted them in loving wise; in sooth he was most rich in virtues.

Then the lovely maiden took him by the hand; full power she granted him within the land. At this Hagen, the bold and doughty knight, rejoiced him. She bade the noble knight go with her hence to the spacious palace. When this was done, they gave the warriors with their service better cheer. With good grace Hagen and Dankwart now must needs submit. The doughty Siegfried was wise enow and bare away his magic cloak. Then he repaired to where the ladies sate. To the king he spake and shrewdly did he this: "Why wait ye, good my lord? Why begin ye not the games, of which the queen doth deal so great a store? Let us soon see how they be played." The crafty man did not as though he wist not a whit thereof.

Then spake the Queen: "How hath it chanced that ye, Sir Siegfried, have seen naught of the games which the hand of Gunther here hath won?"

To this Hagen of the Burgundian land made answer. He spake: "Ye have made us sad of mind, my lady. Siegfried, the good knight, was by the ship when the lord of the Rhineland won from you the games. He knoweth naught thereof."

"Well is me of this tale," spake Siegfried, the knight, "that your pride hath been brought thus low, and that there doth live a wight

who hath the power to be your master. Now, O noble maiden, must ye follow us hence to the Rhine."

Then spake the fair-fashioned maid: "That may not be. First must my kith and liegemen learn of this. Certes, I may not so lightly void my lands; my dearest friends must first be fetched."

Then bade she messengers ride on every side. She called her friends, her kinsmen, and her men-at-arms and begged them come without delay to Isenstein, and bade them all be given lordly and rich apparel. Daily, early and late, they rode in troops to Brunhild's castle.

"Welaway," cried Hagen, "what have we done! We may ill abide the coming of fair Brunhild's men. If now they come into this land in force, then hath the noble maid been born to our great rue. The will of the queen is unknown to us; what if she be so wroth that we be lost?"

Then the stalwart Siegfried spake: "Of that I'll have care. I'll not let hap that which ye fear. I'll bring you help hither to this land, from chosen knights the which till now ye have not known. Ye must not ask about me; I will fare hence. Meanwhile may God preserve your honor. I'll return eftsoon and bring you a thousand men, the very best of knights that I have ever known."

"Pray tarry not too long," spake then the king; "of your help we be justly glad."

He answered: "In a few short days I'll come again. Tell ye to Brunhild, that ye've sent me hence."

ADVENTURE VIII. How Siegfried Fared To His Men-At-Arms, the Nibelungs.

Through the gate Siegfried hied him in his Cloak of Darkness down to the sand, where he found a skiff. Secretly the son of Siegmund embarked and drove it quickly hence, as though the wind did blow it on. None saw the steersman; the bark fared fast, impelled by Siegfried's mighty strength. They weened a seldom strong wind did drive it on. Nay, it was rowed by Siegfried, the son of Siegelind, the fair. In the time of a day and night with might and main he reached a land full hundred rests away, or more. The people hight Nibelungs, where he owned the mighty hoard. The hero rowed alone to a broad isle, where the lusty knight now beached the boat and made it fast full soon. To a hill he hied him, upon which stood a castle, and sought here lodgment, as way-worn travelers do. He came first to a gateway that stood fast locked. In sooth they guarded well their honor, as men still do. The stranger now gan knock upon the door, the which was closely guarded. There within he saw a giant standing, who kept the castle and at whose side lay at all times his arms. He spake: "Who is it who doth knock so rudely on the gate?"

Then bold Siegfried changed his voice and spake: "I am a knight; do up the door, else will I enrage many a one outside to-day, who would liefer lie soft and take his ease."

When Siegfried thus spake, it irked the warder. Meanwhile the giant had donned his armor and placed his helm upon his head. Quickly the mighty man snatched up his shield and opened wide the gate. How fiercely he ran at Siegfried and asked, how he durst wake so many valiant men? Huge blows were dealt out by his hand. Then the lordly stranger gan defend him, but with an iron bar the warder shattered his shield-plates. Then was the hero in dire need. Siegfried gan fear a deal his death, when the warder struck such mighty blows. Enow his master Siegfried loved him for this cause. They strove so sore that all the castle rang and the sound was heard in Nibelung's hall. He overcame the warder and bound him, too.

The tale was noised abroad in all the Nibelungs' land. Alberich, the bold, a savage dwarf, heard the fierce struggle through the mountain. He armed him quick and ran to where he found the noble stranger, as he bound the mighty giant. Full wroth was Alberich and strong enow. On his body he bare helmet and rings of mail and in his hand a heavy scourge of gold. Swift and hard he ran to where Siegfried stood. Seven heavy knobs hung down in front, with which he smote so fiercely the shield upon the bold man's arm, that it brake in parts. The stately stranger came in

danger of his life. From his hand he flung the broken shield and thrust into the sheath a sword, the which was long. He would not strike his servant dead, but showed his courtly breeding as his knightly virtue bade him. He rushed at Alberich and with his powerful hands he seized the gray-haired man by the beard. So roughly he pulled his beard, that he screamed aloud. The tugging of the youthful knight hurt Alberich sore.

Loud cried the valiant dwarf: "Now spare my life. And might I be the vassal of any save one knight, to whom I swore an oath that I would own him as my lord, I'd serve you till my death." So spake the cunning man.

He then bound Alberich as he had the giant afore. Full sore the strength of Siegfried hurt him. The dwarf gan ask: "How are ye named?"

"My name is Siegfried," he replied; "I deemed ye knew me well."

"Well is me of these tidings," spake Alberich, the dwarf. "Now have I noted well the knightly deeds, through which ye be by right the sovran of the land. I'll do whatso ye bid, and ye let me live."

Then spake Sir Siegfried: "Go quickly now and bring me the best of knights we have, a thousand Nibelungs, that they may see me here."

Why he wanted this, none heard him say. He loosed the bonds of Alberich and the giant. Then ran Alberich swift to where he found the knights. In fear he waked the Nibelung men. He spake: "Up now, ye heroes, ye must go to Siegfried."

From their beds they sprang and were ready in a trice. A thousand doughty knights soon stood well clad. They hied them to where they saw Sir Siegfried stand. Then was done a fair greeting, in part by deeds. Great store of tapers were now lit up; they proffered him mulled wine. He gave them thanks that they were come so soon. He spake: "Ye must away with me across the flood."

Full ready for this he found the heroes brave and good. Well thirty hundred men were come eftsoon, from whom he chose a thousand of the best. Men brought them their helmets and other arms, for he would lead them to Brunhild's land. He spake: "Ye good knights, this will I tell you, ye must wear full costly garments there at court, for many lovely dames shall gaze upon us. Therefore must ye deck yourselves with goodly weeds."

Early on a morn they started on their way. What a speedy journey Siegfried won! They took with them good steeds and lordly harness, and thus they came in knightly wise to Brunhild's land. The fair maids stood upon the battlements. Then spake the queen: "Knoweth any, who they be whom I see sailing yonder far out upon the sea? They have rich sails e'en whiter than the snow."

Quoth the king of the Rhineland: "They're men of mine, the which I left hard by here on the way. I had them sent for, and now they be come, my lady." All eyes were fixed upon the lordly strangers.

Then one spied Siegfried standing at his vessel's prow in lordly weeds and many other men. The queen spake: "Sir King, pray tell me, shall I receive the strangers or shall I deny them greetings?"

He spake: "Ye must go to meet them out before the palace, that they may well perceive how fain we be to see them here."

Then the queen did as the king advised her. She marked out Siegfried with her greetings from the rest. Men purveyed them lodgings and took in charge their trappings. So many strangers were now come to the land, that everywhere they jostled Brunhild's bands. Now would the valiant men fare home to Burgundy.

Then spake the queen: "My favor would I bestow on him who could deal out to the king's guests and mine my silver and gold, of which I have such store."

To this Dankwart, King Giselher's liegeman, answered: "Most noble queen," spake the brave knight, "let me but wield the keys. I trow to deal it out in fitting wise; whatso of blame I gain, let be mine own." That he was bountiful, he made appear full well.

When now Sir Hagen's brother took the keys in charge, the hero's hand did proffer many a costly gift. He who craved a mark received such store that all the poor might lead a merry life. Full hundred pounds he gave, nor did he stop to count. Enow walked before the hall in rich attire, who never had worn afore such lordly dress. Full sore it rued the queen when this she heard. She spake: "Sir King, I fain would have your aid, lest your chamberlain leave naught of all my store of dress; he squandereth eke my gold. If

any would forfend this, I'd be his friend for aye. He giveth such royal gifts, the knight must ween, forsooth, that I have sent for death. I would fain use it longer and trow well myself to waste that which my father left me." No queen as yet hath ever had so bounteous a chamberlain.

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "My lady, be it told you that the king of the Rhineland hath such great store of gold and robes to give, that we have no need to carry hence aught of Brunhild's weeds."

"Nay, and ye love me," spake the queen, "let me fill twenty traveling chests with gold and silk as well, the which my hand shall give, when we are come across to Gunther's land."

Men filled her chests with precious stones, the while her chamberlains stood by. She would not trust the duty to Giselher's men. Gunther and Hagen began to laugh thereat.

Then spake the queen: "With whom shall I leave my lands? This my hand and yours must first decree."

Quoth the noble king: "Now bid draw near whom ye deem fit and we will make him steward."

The lady spied near by one of her highest kin (it was her mother's brother); to him the maiden spake: "Now let be commended to your care my castles and my lands, till that King Gunther's hand rule here."

Then twenty hundred of her men she chose, who should fare with her hence to Burgundy, together with those thousand warriors from the Nibelung land. They dressed their journey; one saw them riding forth upon the sand. Six and eighty dames they took along and thereto a hundred maids, their bodies passing fair. No longer now they tarried, for they were fain to get them hence. Ho, what great wail was made by those they left at home! In courtly wise she voided thus her land. She kissed her nearest kinsmen who were found at court. After a fair leave-taking they journeyed to the sea. To her fatherland the lady nevermore returned. Many kinds of games were seen upon the way; pastimes they had galore. A real sea breeze did help them on their voyage. Thus they fared forth from the land fully merrily. She would not let her husband court her on the way; this pleasure was deferred until their wedding-tide in the castle, their home, at Worms, to which in good time she came right joyfully with all her knights.

ADVENTURE IX. How Siegfried Was Sent To Worms.

When they had thus fared on their way full nine days, Hagen of Troneg spake: "Now mark ye what I say. We wait too long with the tidings for Worms upon the Rhine. Our messengers should be e'en now in Burgundy."

Then spake King Gunther: "Ye have told me true, and none be more fitting for this trip than ye, friend Hagen; now ride ye to my land. None can acquaint them better with our journey home to court."

To this Hagen made answer: "I am no fit envoy. Let me play chamberlain, I'll stay with the ladies upon the flood and guard their robes, until we bring them to the Burgundian land. Bid Siegfried bear the message, he knoweth how to do it well with his mighty strength. If he refuse you the journey, then must ye in courtly and gentle wise pray him of the boon for your sister's sake."

Gunther sent now for the warrior, who came to where he stood. He spake: "Sith we be now nearing my lands at home, it behooveth me to send a messenger to the dear sister of mine and to my mother, too, that we draw near the Rhine. This I pray you, Siegfried; now do my will, that I may requite it to you ever," spake the good knight.

Siegfried, the passing bold man, however said him nay, till Gunther gan beseech him sore. He spake: "Ye must ride for my sake and for Kriemhild's too, the comely maiden, so that the royal maid requite it, as well as I."

When Siegfried heard these words, full ready was the knight. "Now bid me what ye will; naught shall be withheld. I will do it gladly for the fair maid's sake. Why should I refuse her whom I bear in heart? Whatso ye command for love of her, shall all be done."

"Then tell my mother Uta, the queen, that we be of lofty mood upon this voyage. Let my brothers know how we have fared. These tidings must ye let our friends hear, too. Hide naught from my fair sister, give her mine and Brunhild's greetings. Greet the retainers, too, and all my men. How well I have ended that for which my heart hath ever striven! And tell Ortwin, the dear nephew of mine, that he bid seats be built at Worms along the Rhine. Let my other kinsmen know that I am willed to hold with Brunhild a mighty wedding feast. And tell my sister, when she hath heard that I be come with my guests to the land, that she give fair greeting to my bride. For that I will ever render Kriemhild service."

The good Lord Siegfried soon took leave of Lady Brunhild, as beseeemed him well, and of all her train; then rode he to the Rhine. Never might there be a better envoy in this world. He rode with four and twenty men-at-arms to Worms; he came without the king. When that was noised about, the courtiers all were grieved; they feared their master had been slain.

Then they dismounted from their steeds, high stood their mood. Giselher, the good young king, came soon to meet them, and Gernot his brother, too. How quickly then he spake, when he saw not Gunther at Siegfried's side: "Be welcome, Siegfried; pray let me know where ye have left the king my brother? The prowess of Brunhild, I ween, hath ta'en him from us. Great scathe had her haughty love then brought us."

"Let be this fear. My battle-comrade sendeth greetings to you and to his kin. I left him safe and sound. He sent me on ahead, that I might be his messenger with tidings hither to this land. Pray have a care, however that may hap, that I may see the queen and your sister, too, for I must let them hear what message Gunther and Brunhild have sent them. Both are in high estate."

Then spake Giselher, the youth: "Now must ye go to her, for ye have brought my much of joy. She is mickle fearful for my brother. I'll answer that the maid will see you gladly."

Then spake Sir Siegfried: "Howsoever I may serve her, that shall be gladly done, in faith. Who now will tell the ladies that I would hie me thither?"

Giselher then became the messenger, the stately man. The doughty knight spake to his mother and his sister too, when that he saw them both: "To us is come Siegfried, the hero from Netherland; him my brother Gunther hath sent hither to the Rhine. He bringeth the news of how it standeth with the king. Pray let him therefore come to court. He'll tell you the right tidings straight from Isenland."

As yet the noble ladies were acquaint with fear, but now for their weeds they sprang and dressed them and bade Sir Siegfried come to court. This he did full gladly, for he was fain to see them. Kriemhild, the noble maid, addressed him fair: "Be welcome, Sir Siegfried, most worshipful knight. Where is my brother Gunther, the noble and mighty king? We ween that we have lost him through Brunhild's strength. Woe is me, poor maid, that ever I was born."

Then spake the daring knight: "Now give me an envoy's gerdon, ye passing fair ladies, ye do weep without a cause. I do you to wit, I left him safe and sound. They have sent me with the tidings to you both. He and his bride do send you kindly greetings and a kinsman's love, O noble queen. Now leave off your weeping, they'll come full soon."

In many a day she had not heard a tale so glad. With her snow-white hem she wiped the tears from her pretty eyes and began to thank the messenger for the tidings, which now were come. Thus her great sorrow and her weeping were taken away. She bade the messenger be seated; full ready he was for this. Then spake the winsome maid: "I should not rue it, should I give you as an envoy's meed my gold. For that ye are too rich, but I will be your friend in other ways."

"And had I alone," spake he, "thirty lands, yet would I gladly receive gifts from your fair hand."

Then spake the courtly maid: "It shall be done." She bade her chamberlain go fetch the meed for tidings. Four and twenty arm-rings, set with goodly gold, she gave him as his meed. So stood the hero's mood that he would not retain them, but gave them straightway to her nearest maidens, he found within the bower.

Full kindly her mother offered him her service. "I am to tell you the tale," then spake the valiant man, "of what the king doth pray you, when he cometh to the Rhine. If ye perform that, my lady, he'll ever hold you in his love. I heard him crave that ye should give fair greetings to his noble guests and grant him the boon, that ye ride to meet him out in front of Worms upon the strand. This ye are right truly admonished by the king to do."

Then spake the winsome maid: "For this am I full ready. In whatsoever wise I can serve the king, that will I not refuse; with a kinsman's love it shall be done." Her color heightened for very joy. Never was the messenger of any prince received more fair. The lady would have kissed him, had she but dared. How lovingly he parted from the dames!

The men of Burgundy then did as Siegfried counseled. Sindolt and Hunolt and Rumolt, the knight, must needs be busy with the work of putting up the seats outside of Worms upon the strand. The royal stewards, too, were found at work. Ortwin and Gere would not desist, but sent to fetch their friends on every side, and made known to them the feasting that was to be. The many comely maids arrayed themselves against the feast. Everywhere the palace and the walls were decked out for the guests. Gunther's hall was passing well purveyed for the many strangers. Thus began full merrily this splendid feast.

From every side along the highways of the land pricked now the kinsmen of these three kings, who had been called that they might wait upon those who were coming home. Then from the presses great store of costly weeds was taken. Soon tidings were brought that men saw Brunhild's kinsmen ride along. Great jostling then arose from the press of folk in the Burgundian land. Ho, what bold knights were found on either side!

Then spake fair Kriemhild: "Ye maids of mine, who would be with me at the greeting, seek out from the guests the very best of robes; then will praise and honor be given us by the guests." Then came the warriors, too, and bade the lordly saddles of pure red gold be carried forth, on which the ladies should ride from Worms down to the Rhine. Better trappings might there never be. Ho, what bright gold did sparkle on the jet-black palfreys! From their bridles there gleamed forth many a precious stone. The golden stepping-blocks were brought and placed on shining carpets for the ladies, who were gay of mood. As I have said, the palfreys now stood ready in the courtyard for the noble maids. One saw the steeds wear narrow martingales of the best of silk, of which tale might be told. Six and eighty ladies who wore fillets in their hair were seen come forth. The fair ones came to Kriemhild wearing glittering robes. Then followed many a comely maid in brave attire, fifty and four from the Burgundian land. They were eke the best that might anywhere be found. Men saw them walking with their flaxen hair and shining ribbons. That which the king desired was done with zeal. They wore before the stranger knights rich cloth of silk, the best that could be found, and so many a goodly robe, which well befitted their ample beauty. One found there many clothes of sable and ermine fur. Many an arm and hand was well adorned with bracelets over the silken sleeves, which they should wear. None might tell the story of this tiring to the end. Many a hand played with well-wrought girdles, rich and long, above gay colored robes, over costly ferran skirts of silken cloth of Araby. In high spirits were these maids of noble birth. Clasps were sewed in lovely wise upon the dress of many a comely maid. She had good cause to rue it, whose bright color did not shine in contrast to her weeds. No kingly race hath now such fair retainers. When now the lovely maids had donned the garments they should wear, there then drew near a mickle band of high-mettled champions. Together with their shields they carried many an ashen spear.

ADVENTURE X. How Brunhild Was Received At Worms.

Across the Rhine men saw the king with his guests in many bands pricking to the shore. One saw the horse of many a maiden, too, led by the bridle. All those who should give them welcome were ready now. When those of Isenland and Siegfried's Nibelung men were come across in boats, they hastened to the shore (not idle were their hands), where the kindred of the king were seen upon the

other bank. Now hear this tale, too, of the queen, the noble Uta, how she herself rode hither with the maidens from the castle. Then many a knight and maid became acquaint. Duke Gere led Kriemhild's palfrey by the bridle till just outside the castle gate. Siegfried, the valiant knight, must needs attend her further. A fair maid was she! Later the noble dame requited well this deed. Ortwin, the bold, rode by Lady Uta's side, and many knights and maidens rode in pairs. Well may we aver that so many dames were never seen together at such stately greeting. Many a splendid joust was ridden by worshipful knights (not well might it be left undone) afore Kriemhild, the fair, down to the ships. Then the fair-fashioned ladies were lifted from the palfreys. The king was come across and many a worthy guest. Ho, what stout lances brake before the ladies' eyes! One heard the clash of many hurtling shields. Ho, what costly bucklers rang loudly as they closed! The lovely fair stood by the shore as Gunther and his guests alighted from the boats; he himself led Brunhild by the hand. Bright gems and gleaming armor shone forth in rivalry. Lady Kriemhild walked with courtly breeding to meet Dame Brunhild and her train. White hands removed the chaplets, as these twain kissed each other; through deference this was done.

Then in courteous wise the maiden Kriemhild spake: "Be ye welcome in these lands of ours, to me and to my mother and to all the loyal kin we have."

Low bows were made and the ladies now embraced full oft. Such loving greeting hath one never heard, as the two ladies, Dame Uta and her daughter, gave the bride; upon her sweet mouth they kissed her oft. When now Brunhild's ladies all were come to land, stately knights took many a comely woman by the hand in loving wise. The fair-fashioned maids were seen to stand before the lady Brunhild. Long time elapsed or ever the greetings all were done; many a rose-red mouth was kissed, in sooth. Still side by side the noble princesses stood, which liked full well the doughty warriors for to see. They who had heard men boast afore that such beauty had ne'er been seen as these two dames possessed, spied now with all their eyes and must confess the truth. Nor did one see upon their persons cheats of any kind. Those who wot how to judge of women and lovely charms, praised Gunther's bride for beauty; but the wise had seen more clear and spake, that one must give Kriemhild the palm before Brunhild.

Maids and ladies now drew near each other. Many a comely dame was seen arrayed full well. Silken tents and many rich pavilions stood hard by, the which quite filled the plain of Worms. The kinsmen of the king came crowding around, when Brunhild and Kriemhild and with them all the dames were bidden go to where shade was found. Thither the knights from the Burgundian land escorted them.

Now were the strangers come to horse, and shields were pierced in many royal jousts. From the plain the dust gan rise, as though the whole land had burst forth into flames. There many a knight became well known as champion. Many a maiden saw what there the warriors plied. Methinks, Sir Siegfried and his knights rode many a turn afore the tents. He led a thousand stately Nibelungs.

Then Hagen of Troneg came, as the king had counseled, and parted in gentle wise the jousting, that the fair maids be not covered with the dust, the which the strangers willingly obeyed. Then spake Sir Gernot: "Let stand the steeds till the air grow cooler, for ye must be full ready when that the king will ride. Meanwhile let us serve the comely dames before the spacious hall."

When now over all the plain the jousts had ceased, the knights, on pastime bent, hid them to the ladies under many a high pavilion in the hope of lofty joys. There they passed the hours until they were minded to ride away.

Just at eventide, when the sun was setting and the air grew chill, no longer they delayed, but man and woman hastened toward the castle. Many a comely maiden was caressed with loving glances. In jousting great store of clothes were torn by good knights, by the high-mettled warriors, after the custom of the land, until the king dismounted by the hall. Valiant heroes helped the ladies, as is their wont. The noble queens then parted; Lady Uta and her daughter went with their train to a spacious hall, where great noise of merriment was heard on every side.

The seats were now made ready, for the king would go to table with his guests. At his side men saw fair Brunhild stand, wearing the crown in the king's domain. Royal enow she was in sooth. Good broad tables, with full many benches for the men, were set with vitaille, as we are told. Little they lacked that they should have! At the king's table many a lordly guest was seen. The chamberlains of the host bare water forth in basins of ruddy gold. It were but in vain, if any told you that men were ever better served at princes' feasts: I would not believe you that.

Before the lord of the Rhineland took the water to wash his hands, Siegfried did as was but meet, he minded him by his troth of what he had promised, or ever he had seen Brunhild at home in Isenland. He spake: "Ye must remember how ye swore me by your hand, that when Lady Brunhild came to this land, ye would give me your sister to wife. Where be now these oaths? I have suffered mickle hardship on our trip."

Then spake the king to his guest: "Rightly have ye minded me. Certes my hand shall not be perjured. I'll bring it to pass as best I can."

Then they bade Kriemhild go to court before the king. She came with her fair maidens to the entrance of the hall. At this Sir Giselher sprang down the steps. "Now bid these maidens turn again. None save my sister alone shall be here by the king."

Then they brought Kriemhild to where the king was found. There stood noble knights from many princes' lands; throughout the broad hall one bade them stand quite still. By this time Lady Brunhild had stepped to the table, too. Then spake King Gunther: "Sweet sister mine, by thy courtesie redeem my oath. I swore to give thee to a knight, and if he become thy husband, then hast thou done my will most loyally."

Quoth the noble maid: "Dear brother mine, ye must not thus entreat me. Certes I'll be ever so, that whatever ye command, that shall be done. I'll gladly pledge my troth to him whom ye, my lord, do give me to husband."

Siegfried here grew red at the glance of friendly eyes. The knight then proffered his service to Lady Kriemhild. Men bade them take their stand at each other's side within the ring and asked if she would take the stately man. In maidenly modesty she was a deal abashed, yet such was Siegfried's luck and fortune, that she would not refuse him out of hand. The noble king of Netherland vowed to take her, too, to wife. When he and the maid had pledged their troths, Siegfried's arm embraced eftsoon the winsome maid. Then the fair queen was kissed before the knights. The courtiers parted, when that had happed; on the bench over against the king Siegfried was seen to take his scat with Kriemhild. Thither many a man accompanied him as servitor; men saw the Nibelungs walk at Siegfried's side.

The king had seated him with Brunhild, the maid, when she espied Kriemhild (naught had ever irked her so) sitting at Siegfried's side. She began to weep and hot tears coursed down fair cheeks. Quoth the lord of the land: "What aileth you, my lady, that ye let bright eyes grow dim? Ye may well rejoice; my castles and my land and many a stately vassal own your sway."

"I have good cause to weep," spake the comely maid; "my heart is sore because of thy sister, whom I see sitting so near thy vassal's side. I must ever weep that she be so demeaned."

Then spake the King Gunther: "Ye would do well to hold your peace. At another time I will tell you the tale of why I gave Siegfried my sister unto wife. Certes she may well live ever happily with the knight."

She spake: "I sorrow ever for her beauty and her courtesie. I fain would flee, and I wist whither I might; go, for never will I lie close by your side, unless ye tell me through what cause Kriemhild be Siegfried's bride."

Then spake the noble king: "I'll do it you to wit; he hath castles and broad domains, as well as I. Know of a truth, he is a mighty king, therefore did I give him the peerless maid to love."

But whatsoever the king might say, she remained full sad of mood.

Now many a good knight hastened from the board. Their hurtling waxed so passing hard, that the whole castle rang. But the host was weary of his guests. Him-thought that he might lie more soft at his fair lady's side. As yet he had not lost at all the

hope that much of joy might hap to him through her. Lovingly he began to gaze on Lady Brunhild. Men bade the guests leave off their knightly games, for the king and his wife would go to bed. Brunhild and Kriemhild then met before the stairway of the hall, as yet without the hate of either. Then came their retinue. Noble chamberlains delayed not, but brought them lights. The warriors, the liegemen of the two kings, then parted on either side and many of the knights were seen to walk with Siegfried.

The lords were now come to the rooms where they should lie. Each of the twain thought to conquer by love his winsome dame. This made them blithe of mood. Siegfried's pleasure on that night was passing great. When Lord Siegfried lay at Kriemhild's side and with his noble love caressed the high-born maid so tenderly, she grew as dear to him as life, so that not for a thousand other women would he have given her alone. No more I'll tell how Siegfried wooed his wife; hear now the tale of how King Gunther lay by Lady Brunhild's side. The stately knight had often lain more soft by other dames. The courtiers now had left, both maid and man. The chamber soon was locked; he thought to caress the lovely maid. Forsooth the time was still far off, ere she became his wife. In a smock of snowy linen she went to bed. Then thought the noble knight: "Now have I here all that I have ever craved in all my days." By rights she must needs please him through her comeliness. The noble king gan shroud the lights and then the bold knight hied him to where the lady lay. He laid him at her side, and great was his joy when in his arms he clasped the lovely fair. Many loving caresses he might have given, had but the noble dame allowed it. She waxed so wroth that he was sore a-troubled; he weened that they were lovers, but he found here hostile hate. She spake: "Sir Knight, pray give this over, which now ye hope. Forsooth this may not hap, for I will still remain a maid, until I hear the tale; now mark ye that."

Then Gunther grew wroth; he struggled for her love and rumpled all her clothes. The high-born maid then seized her girdle, the which was a stout band she wore around her waist, and with it she wrought the king great wrong enow. She bound him hand and foot and bare him to a nail and hung him on the wall. She forbade him love, sith he disturbed her sleep. Of a truth he came full nigh to death through her great strength.

Then he who had weened to be the master, began to plead. "Now loose my bands, most noble queen. I no longer trow to conquer you, fair lady, and full seldom will I lie so near your side."

She reeked not how he felt, for she lay full soft. There he had to hang all night till break of day, until the bright morn shone through the casements. Had he ever had great strength, it was little seen upon him now.

"Now tell me, Sir Gunther, would that irk you aught," the fair maid spake, "and your servants found you bound by a woman's hand?"

Then spake the noble knight: "That would serve you ill; nor would it gain me honor," spake the doughty man. "By your courtesie, pray let me lie now by your side. Sith that my love mislike you so, I will not touch your garment with my hands."

Then she loosed him soon and let him rise. To the bed again, to the lady he went and laid him down so far away, that thereafter he full seldom touched her comely weeds. Nor would she have allowed it.

Then their servants came and brought them new attire, of which great store was ready for them against the morn. However merry men made, the lord of the land was sad enow, albeit he wore a crown that day. As was the usage which they had and which they kept by right, Gunther and Brunhild no longer tarried, but hied them to the minster, where mass was sung. Thither, too, Sir Siegfried came and a great press arose among the crowd. In keeping with their royal rank, there was ready for them all that they did need, their crowns and robes as well. Then they were consecrated. When this was done, all four were seen to stand joyful 'neath their crowns. Many young squires, six hundred or better, were now girt with sword in honor of the kings, as ye must know. Great joy rose then in the Burgundian land; one heard spear-shafts clashing in the hands of the sworded knights. There at the windows the fair maids sat; they saw shining afore them the gleam of many a shield. But the king had sundered him from his liegemen;

whatso others plied, men saw him stand full sad. Unlike stood his and Siegfried's mood. The noble knight and good would fain have known what ailed the king. He hasted to him and gan ask: "Pray let me know how ye have fared this night, Sir King."

Then spake the king to his guest: "Shame and disgrace have I won; I have brought a fell devil to my house and home. When I weened to love her, she bound me sore; she bare me to a nail and hung me high upon a wall. There I hung affrighted all night until the day, or ever she unbound me. How softly she lay bedded there! In hope of thy pity do I make plaint to thee as friend to friend."

Then spake stout Siegfried: "That rueth me in truth. I'll do you this to wit; and ye allow me without distrust, I'll contrive that she lie by you so near this night, that she'll nevermore withhold from you her love."

After all his hardships Gunther liked well this speech. Sir Siegfried spake again: "Thou mayst well be of good cheer. I ween we fared unlike last night. Thy sister Kriemhild is dearer to me than life; the Lady Brunhild must become thy wife to-night. I'll come to thy chamber this night, so secretly in my Cloud Cloak, that none may note at all my arts. Then let the chamberlains be-take them to their lodgings and I'll put out the lights in the pages' hands, whereby thou mayst know that I be within and that I'll gladly serve thee. I'll tame for time thy wife, that thou mayst have her love to-night, or else I'll lose my life."

"Unless be thou embrace my dear lady," spake then the king, "I shall be glad, if thou do to her as thou dost list. I could endure it well, an' thou didst take her life. In sooth she is a fearful wife."

"I pledge upon my troth," quoth Siegfried, "that I will not embrace her. The fair sister of thine, she is to me above all maids that I have ever seen."

Gunther believed full well what Siegfried spake.

From the knightly sports there came both joy and woe; but men forbade the hurtling and the shouting, since now the ladies were to hie them to the hall. The grooms-in-waiting bade the people stand aside; the court was cleared of steeds and folk. A bishop led each of the ladies, as they should go to table in the presence of the kings. Many a stately warrior followed to the seats. In fair hope the king sate now full merrily; well he thought on that which Siegfried had vowed to do. This one day thought him as long as thirty days, for all his thoughts were bent upon his lady's love. He could scarce abide the time to leave the board. Now men let fair Brunhild and Kriemhild, too, both go to their rest. Ho, what doughty knights were seen to walk before the queens!

The Lord Siegfried sate in loving wise by his fair wife, in bliss without alloy. With her snow-white hands she fondled his, till that he vanished from before her eyes, she wist not when. When now she no longer spied him, as she toyed, the queen spake to his followers: "Much this wondereth me, whither the king be gone. Who hath taken his hands from mine?"

She spake no other word, but he was gone to where he found many grooms of the chamber stand with lights. These he gan snuff out in the pages' hands. Thus Gunther knew that it was Siegfried. Well wist he what he would; he bade the maids and ladies now withdraw. When that was done, the mighty king himself made fast the door and nimbly shoved in place two sturdy bolts. Quickly then he hid the lights behind the hangings of the bed. Stout Siegfried and the maiden now began a play (for this there was no help) which was both lief and loth to Gunther. Siegfried laid him close by the high-born maid. She spake: "Now, Gunther, let that be, and it be lief to you, that ye suffer not hardship as afore."

Then the lady hurt bold Siegfried sore. He held his peace and answered not a whit. Gunther heard well, though he could not see his friend a bit, that they plied not secret things, for little ease they had upon the bed. Siegfried bare him as though he were Gunther, the mighty king. In his arms he clasped the lovely maid. She cast him from the bed upon a bench near by, so that his head struck loudly against the stool. Up sprang the valiant man with all his might; fain would he try again. When he thought now to subdue her, she hurt him sore. Such defense, I ween, might nevermore be made by any wife.

When he would not desist, up sprang the maid. "Ye shall not rumple thus my shift so white. Ye are a clumsy churl and it shall rue you sore, I'll have you to know fall well," spake the comely

maid. In her arms she grasped the peerless knight; she weened to bind him, as she had done the king, that she might have her case upon the bed. The lady avenged full sore, that he had rumpled thus her clothes. What availed his mickle force and his giant strength? She showed the knight her masterly strength of limb; she carried him by force (and that must needs be) and pressed him rudely 'twixt a clothes-press and the wall.

"Alas," so thought the knight, "if now I lose my life at a maiden's hands, then may all wives hereafter bear towards their husbands haughty mien, who would never do it else."

The king heard it well and feared him for his liegeman's life. Siegfried was sore ashamed; wrathful he waxed and with surpassing strength he set himself against her and tried it again with Lady Brunhild in fearful wise. It thought the king full long, before he conquered her. She pressed his hands, till from her strength the blood gushed forth from out the nails: this irked the hero. Therefore he brought the highborn maiden to the pass that she gave over her unruly will, which she asserted there afore. The king heard all, albeit not a word he spake. Siegfried pressed her against the bed, so that she shrieked aloud. Passing sore his strength did hurt her. She grasped the girdle around her waist and would fain have bound him, but his hand prevented it in such a wise that her limbs and all her body cracked. Thus the strife was parted and she became King Gunther's wife.

She spake: "Most noble king, pray spare my life. I'll do thee remedy for whatso I have done thee. I'll no longer struggle against thy noble love, for I have learned full well that thou canst make thee master over women."

Siegfried let the maiden be and stepped away, as though he would do off his clothes. From her hand he drew a golden finger ring, without that she wist it, the noble queen. Thereto he took her girdle, a good stout band. I know not if he did that for very haughtiness. He gave it to his wife and rued it sore in after time.

Then lay Gunther and the fair maid side by side. He played the lover, as besemed him, and thus she must needs give over wrath and shame. From his embrace a little pale she grew. Ho, how her great strength failed through love! Now was she no stronger than any other wife. He caressed her lovely form in lover's wise. Had she tried her strength again, what had that availed? All this had Gunther wrought in her by his love. How right lovingly she lay beside him in bridal joy until the dawn of day!

Now was Sir Siegfried gone again to where he was given fair greetings by a woman fashioned fair. He turned aside the question she had thought to put and hid long time from her what he had brought, until she ruled as queen within his land. How little he refused to give her what he should!

On the morn the host was far cheerier of mood than he had been afore. Through this the joy of many a noble man was great in all his lands, whom he had bidden to his court, and to whom he proffered much of service. The wedding feast now lasted till the fourteenth day, so that in all this while the sound never died away of the many joys which there they plied. The cost to the king was rated high. The kinsmen of the noble host gave gifts in his honor to the strolling folk, as the king commanded: vesture and ruddy gold, steeds and silver, too. Those who there craved gifts departed hence full merrily. Siegfried, the lord from Netherland, with a thousand of his men, gave quite away the garments they had brought with them to the Rhine and steeds and saddles, too. Full well they wot how to live in lordly wise. Those who would home again thought the time too long till the rich gifts had all been made. Nevermore have guests been better eased. Thus ended the wedding feast; Gunther, the knight, would have it so.

ADVENTURE XI. How Siegfried Journeyed Homeward With His Wife.

When now the strangers had all ridden hence, Siegmund's son spake to his fellowship: "We must make us ready, too, to journey to my lands."

Lief was it to his wife, when the lady heard the tale aright. She spake to her husband: "When shall we ride? I pray thee, make me not haste too sore. First must my brothers share their lands with me."

It was loth to Siegfried, when he heard this from Kriemhild. The lordings hied them to him and all three spake: "Now may ye know, Sir Siegfried, that our true service be ever at your bidding till our death."

Then he made obeisance to the knights, as it was proffered him in such kindly wise. "We shall share with you," spake Giselher, the youth, "both land and castles which we do own and whatever broad realms be subject to our power. Of these ye and Kriemhild shall have a goodly share."

The son of Siegmund spake to the princes, as he heard and saw the lordings' will: "God grant that ye be ever happy with your heritage and the folk therein. My dear bride can well forego in truth the share which ye would give. There where she shall wear a crown, she shall be mightier than any one alive, and live to see the day. For whatsoever else ye do command, I stand ready to your bidding."

Then spake the Lady Kriemhild: "Though ye forego my heritage, yet is it not so light a matter with the Burgundian men-at-arms. A king might gladly lead them to his land. Forsooth my brothers' hands must share them with me."

Then spake the Lord Gernot: "Now take whomsoever thou dost wish. Thou wilt find here really a one who'll gladly ride with thee. We will give thee a thousand of our thirty hundred warriors; be they thy court retainers."

Kriemhild then gan send for Hagen of Troneg and also for Ortwyn, to ask if they and their kinsfolk would be Kriemhild's men.

At this Hagen waxed wonderly wroth. He spake: "Certes, Gunther may not give us to any in the world. Let others follow as your train. Ye know full well the custom of the men of Troneg: we must in duty bound remain here with the kings at court. We must serve them longer, whom we till now have followed."

They gave that over and made them ready to ride away. Lady Kriemhild gained for herself two and thirty maids and five hundred men, a noble train. The Margrave Eckewart followed Kriemhild hence. They all took leave, both knights and squires and maids and ladies, as was mickle right. Anon they parted with a kiss and voided merrily King Gunther's land. Their kinsmen bare them company far upon the way and bade them pitch their quarters for the night, wherso they listed, throughout the princes' land.

Then messengers were sent eftsoon to Siegmund, that he might know, and Siegelind, too, that his son would come with Lady Uta's child, Kriemhild, the fair, from Worms beyond the Rhine. Lief tidings might they never have. "Well for me," spake then Siegmund, "that I have lived to see fair Kriemhild here as queen. My heritage will be thereby enhanced. My son, the noble Siegfried, shall himself be king."

Then the Lady Siegelind gave much red velvet, silver, and heavy gold; this was the envoy's meed. The tale well liked her, which then she heard. She clad her and her handmaids with care, as did beseech them. Men told who was to come with Siegfried to the land. Anon they bade seats be raised, where he should walk crowned before his friends. King Siegmund's liegemen then rode forth to meet him. Hath any been ever better greeted than the famous hero in Siegmund's land, I know not. Siegelind, the fair, rode forth to meet Kriemhild with many a comely dame (lusty knights did follow on behind), a full day's journey, till one espied the guests. Home-folk and the strangers had little easement till they were come to a spacious castle, hight Xanten, where they later rejoined.

Smilingly Siegelind and Siegmund kissed Kriemhild many times for joy and Siegfried, too; their sorrow was taken from them. All their fellowship received great welcome. One bade now bring the guests to Siegmund's hall, and lifted the fair young maids down from the palfreys. Many a knight gan serve the comely dames with zeal. However great the feasting at the Rhine was known to be, here one gave the heroes much better robes than they had worn in all their days. Of their splendor great marvels might be told. When now they sate in lofty honors and had enow of all, what gold-hued clothes their courtiers wore with precious stones well worked thereon! Thus did Siegelind, the noble queen, purvey them well.

Then to his friends Lord Siegmund spake: "I do all Siegfried's kin to wit, that he shall wear my crown before these knights." Those of Netherland heard full fain the tale. He gave his son the crown, the cognizance, and lands, so that he then was master of them all. When that men went to law and Siegfried uttered judgment, that was done in such a wise that men feared sore fair Kriemhild's husband.

In these high honors Siegfried lived, of a truth, and judged as king, till the tenth year was come, when his fair lady bare a son. This was come to pass after the wish of the kinsmen of the king. They hastened to baptize and name him Gunther for his uncle; nor had he need to be ashamed of this. Should he grow like to his kinsman, he would fare full well. They brought him up with care, as was but due. In these same times the Lady Siegelind died, and men enow made wail when death bereft them of her. Then the child of the noble Uta held withal the power over the lands, which well be seemed such high-born dames.

Now also by the Rhine, as we hear tell, at mighty Gunther's court, in the Burgundian land, Brunhild, the fair, had born a son. For the hero's sake they named him Siegfried. With what great care they bade attend him! The noble Gunther gave him masters who well wot how to bring him up to be a doughty man. Alas, what great loss of kin he later suffered through misfortune!

Many tales were told all time, of how right worshipfully the lusty knights dwelt alway in Siegmund's land. Gunther dealt the same with his distinguished kin. The Nibelung land and Schilbung's knights and the goods of both served Siegfried here (none of his kinsmen ever waxed mightier than he). So much the higher rose the mood of the valiant man. The very greatest heard that any hero ever gained, save those who owned it aforetime, the bold man had, the which he had won by his own hand hard by a hill, and for which he did many a lusty knight to death. He had honors to his heart's desire, and had this not been so, yet one must rightly aver of the noble champion, that he was one of the best that ever mounted horse. Men feared his might and justly, too.

ADVENTURE XII. How Gunther Bade Siegfried To The Feasting.

Now Gunther's wife thought alway: "How haughtily doth Lady Kriemhild bear her! Is not her husband Siegfried our liegeman? Long time now hath he done us little service." This she bare within her heart, but held her peace. It irked her sore that they did make themselves such strangers and that men from Siegfried's land so seldom served her. Fain would she have known from whence this came. She asked the king if it might hap that she should see Kriemhild again. Secretly she spake what she had in mind. The speech like the king but moderately well. "How might we bring them," quoth he, "hither to our land? That were impossible, they live too far away; I dare not ask them this."

To this Brunhild replied in full crafty wise: "However high and mighty a king's vassal be, yet should he not leave undone whatsoever his lord command him."

King Gunther smiled when she spake thus. However oft he saw Siegfried, yet did he not count it to him as service.

She spake: "Dear lord, for my sake help me to have Siegfried and thy sister come to this land, that we may see them here. Naught liefer might ever hap to me in truth. Whenso I think on thy sister's courtesie and her well-bred mind, how it delighteth me! How we sate together, when I first became thy wife! She may with honor love bold Siegfried."

She besought so long, till the king did speak: "Now know that I have never seen more welcome guests. Ye need but beg me gently. I will send my envoys for the twain, that they may come to see us to the Rhine."

Then spake the queen: "Pray tell me then, when ye are willed to send for them, or in what time our dear kinsmen shall come into the land. Give me also to know whom ye will send thither."

"That will I," said the prince. "I will let thirty of my men ride thither."

He had these come before him and bade them carry tidings to Siegfried's land. To their delight Brunhild did give them full lordly vesture.

Then spake the king: "Ye knights must say from me all that I bid you to mighty Siegfried and the sister of mine; this must ye not conceal: that no one in the world doth love them more, and beg them both to come to us to the Rhine. For this I and my lady will be ever at your service. At the next Midsummer's Day shall he and his men gaze upon many here, who would fain do them great honor. Give to the king Siegmund my greetings, and say that I and my kinsmen be still his friends, and tell my sister, too, that she fail not to ride to see her kin. Never did feasting besem her better."

Brunhild and Uta and whatever ladies were found at court all commended their service to the lovely dames and the many valiant men in Siegfried's land. With the consent of the kinsmen of the king the messengers set forth. They rode as wandering knights; their horses and their trappings had now been brought them. Then they voided the land, for they had haste of the journey, whither they would fare. The king bade guard the messengers well with convoys. In three weeks they came riding into the land, to Nibelung's castle, in the marches of Norway, whither they were sent. Here they found the knight. The mounts of the messengers were weary from the lengthy way.

Both Siegfried and Kriemhild were then told that knights were come, who wore such clothes as men were wont to wear at Burgundy. She sprang from a couch on which she lay to rest and bade a maiden hie her to the window. In the court she saw bold Gere standing, him and the fellowship that had been sent thither. What joyful things she there found against her sorrow of heart! She spake to the king: "Now behold where they stand, who walk in the court with the sturdy Gere, whom my brother sendeth us adown the Rhine."

Spake Then the valiant Siegfried: "They be welcome to us."

All the courtiers ran to where one saw them. Each of them in turn then spake full kindly, as best he could to the envoys. Siegmund, the lord, was right blithe of their coming. Then Gere and his men were lodged and men bade take their steeds in charge. The messengers then went hence to where Lord Siegfried sate by Kriemhild. This they did, for they had leave to go to court. The host and his lady rose from their seats at once and greeted well Gere of the Burgundian land with his fellowship, Gunther's liegemen. One bade the mighty Gere go and sit him down.

"Permit us first to give our message, afore we take our seats; let us way-worn strangers stand the while. We be come to tell you tidings which Gunther and Brunhild, with whom all things stand well, have sent you, and also what Lady Uta, your mother, sendeth. Giseler, the youth, and Sir Gernot, too, and your dearest kin, they have sent us hither and commend their service to you from out the Burgundian land."

"Now God requite them," quoth Siegfried; "I trow them much troth and good, as one should to kinsfolk; their sister doth the same. Ye must tell us more, whether our dear friends at home be of good cheer? Since we have been parted from them, hath any done amiss to my lady's kinsmen? That ye must let me know. If so, I'll ever help them bear it in duty bound, until their foes must rue my service."

Then spake the Margrave Gere, a right good knight: "They are in every virtue of such right high mood, that they do bid you to a feasting by the Rhine. They would fain see you, as ye may not doubt, and they do beg my lady that she come with you, when the winter hath taken an end. They would see you before the next Midsummer's Day."

Quoth the stalwart Siegfried: "That might hardly hap."

Then answered Gere from the Burgundian land: "Your mother Uta, Gernot, and Giseler have charged you, that ye refuse them not. I hear daily wail, that ye do live so far away. My Lady Brunhild and all her maids be fain of the tidings, if that might be that they should see you again; this would raise their spirits high." These tidings thought fair Kriemhild good.

Gere was of their kin; the host bade him be seated and had wine poured out for the guests; no longer did they tarry. Now Siegmund was come to where he saw the messengers. The lord said to the

Burgundians in friendly wise: "Be welcome, Sir Knights, ye men of Gunther. Sith now Siegfried, my son, hath won Kriemhild to wife, one should see you more often here in this our land, if ye would show your kinship."

They answered that they would gladly come, when so he would. Of their weariness they were cased with joyous pastime. Men bade the messengers be seated and brought them food, of which Siegfried had them given great store. They must needs stay there full nine days, till at last the doughty knights made plaint, that they durst not ride again to their land.

Meantime king Siegfried had sent to fetch his friends; he asked them what they counseled, whether or no they should to the Rhine. "My kinsman Gunther and his kin have sent to fetch me for a feasting. Now I would go full gladly, but that his land doth lie too far away. They beg Kriemhild, too, that she journey with me. Now advise, dear friends, in what manner she shall ride thither. Though I must harry for them through thirty lands, yet would Siegfried's arm fain serve them there."

Then spake his warriors: "And ye be minded to journey to the feasting, we will advise what ye must do. Ye should ride to the Rhine with a thousand knights, then can ye stand with worship there in Burgundy land."

Up spake then Lord Siegmund of Netherland: "Will ye to the feasting, why make ye it not known to me? If ye scorn it not, I will ride thither with you and will take a hundred knights, wherewith to swell your band."

"And will ye ride with us, dear father mine," quoth brave Siegfried, "glad shall I be of that. Within a twelfth night I will quit my lands."

All who craved it were given steeds and vesture, too.

Since now the noble king was minded for the journey, men bade the good and speedy envoys ride again. He sent word to his wife's kindred on the Rhine, that he would full fain be at their feasting. Siegfried and Kriemhild, as the tale doth tell, gave the messengers such store of gifts that their horses could not bear them to their native land. A wealthy man was he. They drove their sturdy sumpters merrily along.

Siegfried and Siegmund arrayed their men. Eckewart, the margrave, that very hour bade seek out ladies' robes, the best that were at hand or might be found throughout all Siegfried's land. Men gan prepare the saddles and the shields. To knights and ladies who should go hence with him was given whatso they would, so that they wanted naught. He brought to his kinsfolk many a lordly stranger.

The messengers pricked fast upon their homeward way. Now was Gere, the knight, come to Burgundy and was greeted fair. Then they dismounted from their steeds and from the nags in front of Gunther's hall. Young and old did hie them, as people do, to ask the tidings. Quoth the good knight: "When I tell them to the king, thou be at hand a hear."

With his fellowship he went to where he found King Gunther. For very joy the king sprang from his seat. Fair Brunhild cried them mercy, that they were come so quick. Gunther spake to the envoys: "How fareth Siegfried, from whom so much of gladness hath happened to me?"

Brave Gere spake: "He blushed for joy, he and your sister; no truer tidings did ever any man send to friends, than the Lord Siegfried and his father, too, have sent to you."

Then to the margrave spake the noble queen: "Now tell me, cometh Kriemhild to us? Hath the fair still kept the graces which she knew how to use?"

"She cometh to you surely," quoth Gere, the knight.

Then Uta bade the messenger come quickly to her. By her question one might note full well that she was fain to hear if Kriemhild still were well. He told how he had found her and that she would shortly come. Nor were the gifts concealed by them at court, which Siegfried gave them, gold and vesture; these they brought for the vassals of the three kings to see. For their passing great bounty men gave them thanks.

"He may lightly give great gifts," spake then Hagen; "he could not squander all his wealth, and he should live for aye. His hand hath closed upon the hoard of the Nibelungs. Ho, let him only come to the Burgundian land!"

All the courtiers were glad that they should come. Early and late the men of the three kings were busy. Many benches they gan raise for the folk. The valiant Hunolt and the knight Sindolt had little rest. All time they had to oversee the stewards and the butlers and raise many a bench. Ortwin helped them, too, at this, and Gunther said them thanks. Rumolt, the master cook, how well he ruled his underlings! Ho, how many a broad kettle, pot, and pan they had! They made ready the vitaille for those who were coming to the land.

ADVENTURE XIII. How They Journeyed To The Feasting.

Let us now take leave of all their bustling, and tell how Lady Kriemhild and her maidens journeyed from the Nibelung land down toward the Rhine. Never did sumpters bear so much lordly raiment. They made ready for the way full many traveling chests. Then Siegfried, the knight, and the queen as well, rode forth with their friends to where they had hope of joys. Later it sped them all to their great harm. They left Siegfried's little child, Kriemhild's son, at home. That must needs be. Great grief befell him through their journey to the court. The bairn never saw his father and his mother more. With them, too, there rode Lord Siegmund. Had he known aright how he would fare at the feasting, no whit of it would he have seen. No greater woe might ever hap to him in loving friends.

Messengers were sent ahead, who told the tale. Then with a stately band there rode to meet them many of Uta's kith and Gunther's liegemen. The host gan bestir him for his guests. He went to where Brunhild sate and asked: "How did my sister greet you when ye came to our land? In like manner must ye greet Siegfried's wife."

"That will I gladly," quoth she, "for I have good cause to be her friend."

The mighty king spake further: "They come to us early on the morrow; if ye would greet them, set quickly to work, that we abide them not within the castle. At no time have such welcome guests ever come to see me."

At once she bade her maids and ladies hunt out goodly raiment, the best they had, the which her train should wear before the guests. One may lightly say, they did this gladly. Gunther's men hastened also for to serve them, and around him the host did gather all his knights. Then the queen rode forth in princely wise and mickle greeting of the welcome guests was done. With what great joy did they receive them! It thought them as though Lady Kriemhild had not greeted Lady Brunhild so fair in the Burgundian land. Those who had never seen her became acquaint with lofty mood.

Now was Siegfried come with his liegemen. One saw the heroes wending to and fro upon the plain in unwieldy bands. None might guard him there against the jostling and the dust.

When that the ruler of the land spied Siegfried and Siegmund, how lovingly he spake: "Now be ye full welcome to me and all my friends; we shall be of good cheer because of this your journey to our court."

"Now God requite you," quoth Siegmund, the honor-seeking man; "sith my son Siegfried won you to kinsman, my heart hath urged that I should go to see you."

At this spake Gunther: "Now hath joy happened to me thereby."

Siegfried was received with much great worship as beseemed him; none bare him hatred there. Giseler and Gernot helped thereby with great courtesie. I ween, never have guests been greeted in such goodly wise.

Then the wives of the two kings drew near each other. Emp-tied were many saddles, as fair ladies were lifted down by knightly hands upon the sward. How busy were those who gladly served the dames! The lovely women now drew near each other, and many a knight was blithe, that such fair greeting passed between the twain. Then one saw great press of warriors standing by the high-born maids. The lordly meiny grasped each other by the hand. Much courteous bowing was seen and loving kisses from fair-fashioned dames. This liked well Gunther's and Siegfried's liegemen for to see. They bided now no longer, but rode to town.

The host bade show his guests full well that all were fain to see them in the Burgundian land. Many a royal joust took place before the high-born maids. Hagen of Troneg and Ortwin, too, proved full well their prowess. One durst not leave undone whatso they would command. Much service was rendered by them to the welcome guests. Many shields were heard resound from thrusts and blows before the castle gate. The host and his guests tarried long time without, or ever they came within. Forsooth the hours passed quickly for them with their sports. Merrily they rode before the royal palace. Many cunning housings of good cloth and well cut were seen hanging on either side from the saddles of the fair-fashioned dames.

Then came Gunther's liegemen. Men bade lead the strangers quickly to their easement. At times one saw Brunhild glance at Lady Kriemhild, who was passing fair enow. Her color against the gold gave back the gleam in lovely wise. On every side in Worms one heard the courtiers shout. Gunther bade Dankwart, his marshal, have them in his care, who then gan lodge the retinue in goodly wise. One let them eat within and eke without. Never were stranger guests better cared for. Men gave them gladly all they craved; so rich was the king, that not a wish was there denied. Men served them in friendly wise without all hate. The host now took his seat at table with his guests. One bade Siegfried be seated where he sate afore. Then many a stately man went with him to the seats. Twelve hundred warriors in sooth did sit at his round table. Brunhild thought her that a vassal could not be mightier than he; yet she was still so friendly to him that she did not wish his death.

On an evening when the king was seated at the board, many costly robes were wet with wine, as the butlers hied them to the tables. Full service was given there with mickle zeal. As hath long been the wont at feasts, men bade the ladies and the maids be given fair lodgment. From wherever they were come, the host bare them right good will. One gave them all enow with goodly honors.

When the night had an end and the day appeared, many a precious stone from the sumpter chests sparkled on goodly weeds, as they were touched by woman's hand. Many a lordly robe was taken forth. Or ever the day had fully dawned, many knights and squires came out before the hall. Then rose a merry rout before the early mass, which was sung for the king. There young heroes rode so well that the king did cry them mercy. Many a trumpet rang out passing loud, and the noise of drums and flutes did grow so great that the broad town of Worms reechoed with the sound. The high-mettled heroes horsed them everywhere. Then there rose in the land high knightly play from many a doughty champion; one saw a great rout of them whose youthful hearts beat high, and many a dapper knight and a good stood armed with shield. At the easements sate the high-born dames and many comely maids, decked out in brave attire. They watched the pastimes of the many valiant men. The host himself gan tilt there with his friends. Thus they passed the time, the which seemed aught but long.

Then from the dome was heard the sound of many bells. The palfreys came, the ladies rode away; but many a bold man followed the noble queens. They alighted on the green before the minster; Brunhild was still friendly to her guests. Wearing crowns, they entered the spacious church. Later their love was parted, which caused great hate. When they had heard the mass, they rode away again with many honors and were soon seen going merrily to table. Their pleasure at the feasting did not flag until the eleventh day.

ADVENTURE XIV. How The Queens Reviled Each Other.

On a day before the vesper tide a great turmoil arose, which many knights made in the court, where they plied their knightly sports for pastime's sake, and a great throng of men and women hastened there to gaze. The royal queens had sat them down together and talked of two worshipful knights.

Then spake the fair Kriemhild: "I have a husband who by right should rule over all these kingdoms."

Quoth Lady Brunhild: "How might that be? If none other lived but he and thou, then might these kingdoms own his sway, but the while Gunther liveth, this may never hap."

Kriemhild replied: "Now dost thou see, how he standeth, how right royally he walketh before the knights, as the moon doth before the stars? Therefore must I needs be merry of mood."

Said Lady Brunhild: "However stately be thy husband, howso worthy and fair, yet must thou grant the palm to Knight Gunther, the noble brother of thine. Know of a truth, he must be placed above all kings."

Then Kriemhild spake again: "So doughty is my husband, that I have not lauded him without good cause. His worship is great in many things. Dost thou believe it, Brunhild, he is easily Gunther's peer."

"Forsooth thou must not take it amiss of me, Kriemhild, for I have not spoken thus without good reason. I heard them both aver, when I saw them first of all, and the king was victor against me in the games, and when he won my love in such knightly wise, that he was liegeman to the king, and Siegfried himself declared the same. I hold him therefore as my vassal, sith I heard him speak thus himself."

Then spake fair Kriemhild: "Ill had I then sped. How could my noble brothers have so wrought, that I should be a mere vassal's bride? Therefore I do beseech thee, Brunhild, in friendly wise, that for my sake thou kindly leave off this speech."

"I'll not leave it off," quoth the king's wife. "Why should I give up so many a knight, who with the warrior doth owe us service?"

Kriemhild, the passing fair, waxed wroth out of wit. "Thou must forego that ho ever do you a vassal's service; he is worthier than my brother Gunther, the full noble man. Thou must retract what I have heard thee say. Certes, it wondereth me, sith he be thy vassal and thou hast so much power over us twain, why he hath rendered thee no tribute so long a time. By right I should be spared thy overweening pride."

"Thou bedrest thee too high," spake the king's wife. "I would fain see whether men will hold thee in such high honor as they do me."

The ladies both grew wonderly wroth of mood. Then spake the Lady Kriemhild: "This must now hap. Sith thou hast declared my husband for thy liegeman, now must the men of the two kings perceive to-day whether I durst walk before the queen to church. Thou must see to-day that I am noble and free and that my husband is worthier than thine; nor will I myself be taxed therewith. Thou shalt mark to-day how thy liegewoman goeth to court before the knights of the Burgundian land. I myself shall be more worshipful than any queen was known to be, who ever wore a crown." Great hate enow rose then betwixt the ladies.

Then Brunhild answered: "Wilt thou not be a liegewoman of mine, so must thou sunder thee with thy ladies from my train when that we go to church."

To this Kriemhild replied: "In faith that shall be done."

"Now array you, my maids," spake Siegfried's wife. "I must be here without reproach. Let this be seen to-day, and ye do have rich weeds. Brunhild shall fain deny what she hath here averred."

They needed not much bidding, but sought rich robes and many a dame and maid attired her well. Then the wife of the noble king went forth with her train. Fair Kriemhild, too, was well arrayed and three and forty maidens with her, whom she had brought hither to the Rhine. They wore bright vesture wrought in Araby, and thus the fair-fashioned maids betook them to the minster. All Siegfried's men awaited them before the house. The folk had marvel whence it chanced that the queens were seen thus sundered, so that they did not walk together as afore. From this did many a warrior later suffer dire distress. Here before the minster stood Gunther's wife, while many a good knight had pastime with the comely dames whom they there espied.

Then came the Lady Kriemhild with a large and noble train. Whatever kind of clothes the daughters of noble knights have ever worn, these were but the wind against her retinue. She was so rich in goods, that what the wives of thirty kings could not purvey, that Kriemhild did. An' one would wish to, yet he could not aver that men had ever seen such costly dresses as at this time her fair-fashioned maidens wore. Kriemhild had not done it, save to anger

Brunhild. They met before the spacious minster. Through her great hate the mistress of the house in evil wise bade Kriemhild stand: "Forsooth no vassaless should ever walk before the queen."

Then spake fair Kriemhild (angry was her mood): "Couldst thou have held thy peace, 'twere well for thee. Thou hast disgraced thee and the fair body of thine. How might a vassal's leman ever be the wife of any king?"

"Whom callest thou here leman?" spake the queen.

"That call I thee," quoth Kriemhild. "Thy fair person was first caressed by Siegfried, my dear husband. Certes, it was not my brother who won thy maidhood. Whither could thy wits have wandered? It was an evil trick. Wherefore didst thou let him love thee, sith he be thy vassal? I hear thee make plaint without good cause," quoth Kriemhild.

"I faith," spake then Brunhild, "Gunther shall hear of this."

"What is that to me?" said Kriemhild. "Thy pride hath bewrayed thee. With words thou hast claimed me for thy service. Know, by my troth, it will ever grieve me, for I shall be no more thy faithful friend."

Then Brunhild wept. Kriemhild delayed no longer, but entered the minster with her train before the queen. Thus there rose great hatred, from which bright eyes grew dim and moist.

Whatso men did or sang to God's service there, the time seemed far too long for Brunhild, for she was sad of heart and mood. Many a brave knight and a good must later rue this day. Brunhild with her ladies now went forth and stopped before the minster. Her thought: "Kriemhild must tell me more of what this word-shrewd woman hath so loudly charged me. Hath Siegfried made boast of this, 'twill cost his life."

Now the noble Kriemhild came with many a valiant liegeman. Lady Brunhild spake: "Stand still a while. Ye have declared me for a leman, that must ye let be seen. Know, that through thy speech, I have fared full ill."

Then spake the Lady Kriemhild: "Ye should have let me pass. I'll prove it by the ring of gold I have upon my hand, and which my lover brought me when he first lay at your side."

Brunhild had never seen so ill a day. She spake: "This costly hoop of gold was stolen from me, and hath been hid full long a time from me in evil wise. I'll find out yet who hath ta'en it from me."

Both ladies now had fallen into grievous wrath.

Kriemhild replied: "I'll not be called a thief. Thou hadst done better to have held thy peace, an' thou hold thine honor dear. I'll prove it by the girdle which I wear about my waist, that I lie not. Certes, my Siegfried became thy lord."

She wore the cord of silk of Nineveh, set with precious stones; in sooth 'twas fair enow. When Brunhild spied it, she began to weep. Gunther and all the Burgundian men must needs now learn of this.

Then spake the queen: "Bid the prince of the Rhineland come hither. I will let him hear how his sister hath mocked me. She saith here openly that I be Siegfried's wife."

The king came with knights, and when he saw his love aweeping, how gently he spake: "Pray tell me, dear lady, who hath done you aught?"

She answered to the king: "I must stand unhappy; thy sister would fain part me from all mine honors. I make here plaint to thee she doth aver that Siegfried, her husband hath had me as his leman."

Quoth King Gunther: "Then hath she done ill"

"She weareth here my girdle, which I have lost, and my ring of ruddy gold. It doth repent me sore that I was ever born, unless be thou clearest me of this passing great shame, for that I'll serve thee ever."

King Gunther spake: "Have him come hither. He must let us hear if he hath made boast of this, or he must make denial, the hero of Netherland." One bade fetch at once Kriemhild's love.

When Siegfried saw the angry dames (he wist not of the tale), how quickly then he spake: "I fain would know why these ladies weep, or for what cause the king hath had me fetched."

Then King Gunther spake: "It doth rue me sore, forsooth. My Lady Brunhild hath told me here a tale, that thou hast boasted

thou wast the first to clasp her lovely body in thine arms; this Lady Kriemhild, thy wife, doth say."

Then spake Lord Siegfried: "And she hath told this tale, she shall rue it sore, or ever I turn back, and I'll clear me with solemn oaths in front of all thy men, that I have not told her this."

Quoth the king of the Rhineland: "Let that be seen. The oath thou dost offer, and let it now be given, shall free thee of all false charges."

They bade the proud Burgundians form a ring. Siegfried, the bold, stretched out his hand for the oath; then spake the mighty king: "Thy great innocence is so well known to me, that I will free thee of that of which my sister doth accuse thee and say, thou hast never done this thing."

Siegfried replied: "If it boot my lady aught to have thus saddened Brunhild, that will surely cause me boundless grief."

Then the lusty knights and good gazed one upon the other. "One should so train women," spake again Siegfried, the knight, "that they leave haughty words unsaid. Forbid it to thy wife, and I'll do the same to mine. In truth, I do shame me of her great discourtesie."

Many fair ladies were parted by the speech. Brunhild mourned so sore, that it moved King Gunther's men to pity. Then came Hagen of Troneg to his sovran lady. He found her weeping, and asked what grief she had. She told him then the tale. On the spot he vowed that Kriemhild's lord should rue it sore, or he would nevermore be glad. Ortwin and Gernot joined their parley and these heroes counseled Siegfried's death. Giseler, the son of the noble Uta, came hither too. When he heard the talk, he spake full true: "Ye trusty knights, wherefore do ye this? Siegfried hath not merited forsooth such hate, that he should therefore lose his life. Certes, women oft grow angry over little things."

"Shall we then raise cuckolds?" answered Hagen; "such good knights would gain from that but little honor. Because he hath boasted of my liege lady, I will rather die, an' it cost him not his life."

Then spake the king himself: "He hath shown us naught but love and honor, so let him live. What booteth it, if I now should hate the knight? He was ever faithful to us and that right willingly."

Knight Ortwin of Metz then spake: "His great prowess shall not in sooth avail him aught. If my lord permit, I'll do him every evil."

So without cause the heroes had declared a feud against him. In this none followed, save that Hagen counselled all time Knight Gunther the that if Siegfried no longer lived, then many kingly lands would own his sway. At this the king grew sad, so they let it rest.

Jousting was seen once more. Ho, what stout shafts they splintered before the minster in the presence of Siegfried's wife, even down to the hall! Enow of Gunther's men were now in wrath. The king spake: "Let be this murderous rage, he is born to our honor and to our joy. Then, too, the wonderly bold man is so fierce of strength, that none durst match him, if he marked it."

"No, not he," spake Hagen then, "Ye may well keep still; I trow to bring it to pass in secret, that he rue Brunhild's tears. Certes, Hagen hath broken with him for all time."

Then spake King Gunther: "How might that chance?"

To this Hagen made answer: "I'll let you hear. We'll bid messengers, that be not known to any here, ride into our land, to declare war upon us openly. Then do ye say before your guests that ye and your men will take the field. When that is done, he will vow to serve you then and from this he shall lose his life, an' I learn the tale from the bold knight's wife."

The king followed his liegeman Hagen in evil wise. These chosen knights gan plan great faithlessness, or ever any one was ware. From two women's quarreling full many a hero lost his life.

ADVENTURE XV. How Siegfried Was Betrayed.

Upon the fourth morning two and thirty men were seen to ride to court and the tale was brought to mighty Gunther that war had been declared. The very direst woes befell fair women from a lie. They gained leave to come before the king and say that they were

Liudeger's men, whom Siegfried's hand had conquered afore and had brought as hostages to Gunther's land. He greeted then the messengers and bade them go and seat them. One among them spake: "My lord, pray let us stand till we have told the message we do bear you. This know, ye have of a truth many a mother's son as foe. Liudegast and Liudeger, whom ye one time gave grievous sores, declare a feud against you and are minded to ride with an army to this land." The king waxed wroth when he heard This tale.

Men bade lead the perjurers to their lodgings. How might Siegfried, or any else against whom they plotted, ware himself against their wiles? This later brought great sorrow to them all. The king walked whispering with his friends; Hagen of Troneg never let him rest. Enow of the king's liegemen would fain have parted the strife, but Hagen would not give up his plan. On a day Siegfried found them whispering. The hero of Netherland gan ask: "How go the king and his men so sadly? I'll help avenge it, hath any done you aught?"

Then spake King Gunther: "I am rightly sad. Liudegast and Liudeger have challenged me to war; they are minded to ride openly into my land."

At this the bold knight said: "Siegfried's hand shall hinder that with zeal, as beseemeth all your honors. I'll do yet to these knights as I did before; I'll lay waste their lands, or ever I turn again. Be my head your pledge of this. Ye and your warriors shall stay at home and let me ride to meet them with those I have. I'll let you see how fain I serve you. This know, through me it shall go evil with your foes."

"Well is me of these tidings," spake then the king, as though he were glad in earnest of this aid. With guile the faithless man bowed low.

Quoth Lord Siegfried: "Ye shall have small care."

Then they made ready for the journey hence with the men-at-arms. This was done for Siegfried and his men to see. He, too, bade those of Netherland get them ready. Siegfried's warriors sought out warlike weeds. Then the stalwart Siegfried spake: "My father Siegmund, ye must stay here. We shall return in short space hither to the Rhine, and God give us luck. Ye must here make merry with the king."

They tied fast their banners, as though they would away, and there were enow of Gunther's men who wist not wherefore this was done. Great rout of men was seen at Siegfried's side. They bound their helmets and their breastplates upon the steeds, and many a stout knight made ready to quit the land. Then Hagen of Troneg went to find Kriemhild and asked for leave; sith they would void the land.

"Now well is me," spake Kriemhild, "that I have won a husband who dare protect so well my loving kinsfolk, as my Lord Siegfried doth here. Therefore," spake the queen, "will I be glad of heart. Dear friend Hagen, think on that, that I do serve you gladly and never yet did bear you hate. Requite this now to me in my dear husband. Let him not suffer, if I have done to Brunhild aught. I since have rued it," spake the noble wife. "Moreover, he since hath beaten me black and blue; the brave hero and a good hath well avenged that ever I spake what grieved her heart."

"Ye'll be friends once more after some days. Kriemhild, dear lady, pray tell me how I may serve you in your husband Siegfried. Liefer will I do this for you than for any else."

"I should be without all fear," quoth the noble dame, "that any one would take his life in the fray, if he would not follow his overweening mood; then the bold knight and a good were safe."

"Lady," spake then Hagen, "an' ye do think that men might wound him, pray let me know with what manner of arts I can prevent this. On foot, on horse, will I ever be his guard."

She spake: "Thou art my kinsman and I am thine. I'll commend to thee trustingly the dear lover of mine, that thou mayst guard him well, mine own dear husband." She made him acquaint with tales which had been better left unsaid. She spake: "My husband is brave and strong enow. When he slew the dragon on the hill, the lusty warrior bathed him of a truth in the blood, so that since then no weapon ever cut him in the fray. Yet am I in fear, whenever he standeth in the fight and many javelins are cast by heroes' hands, that I may lose this dear husband of mine. Alas, how oft I suffer sore for Siegfried's sake! Dear kinsman, in the hope that thou wilt

hold thy troth with me, I'll tell thee where men may wound the dear lord of mine. I let thee hear this, 'tis done in faith. When the hot blood gushed from the dragon's wounds and the bold hero and a good bathed him therein, a broad linden leaf did fall betwixt his shoulder blades. Therefore am I sore afraid that men may cut him there."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "Sew a small mark upon his coat, whereby I may know where I must guard him, when we stand in battle."

She weened to save her knight, but 'twas done unto his death. She spake: "With fine silk I'll sew a secret cross upon his vesture. There, knight, thy hand must guard my husband, when the strife is on and he standeth in the battle before his foes."

"That will I well, dear my lady," Hagen then replied.

The lady weened that it would boot him aught, but Kriemhild's husband was thereby betrayed. Hagen then took leave; merrily he hid him hence. The king's liegeman was blithe of mood. I ween that nevermore will warrior give such false counsel, as was done by him when Kriemhild trusted in his troth.

Next morning Siegfried with a thousand of his men rode merrily forth. He weened he should avenge the grievance of his kinsmen. Hagen rode so near him that he could eye his clothes. When he saw the sign, he sent in secret twain of his men, who should tell another tale: that Gunther's land should still have peace and that Liudeger had sent them to the king. How loth Siegfried now rode home again, or ever he had avenged his kinsmen's wrongs! Gunther's men could hardly turn him back. He rode then to the king; the host gan thank him. "Now God requite you of your will, friend Siegfried, that ye do so willingly what I bid you. For this I'll ever serve you, as I rightly should. I trust you more than all my friends. Now that we be rid of this foray, I am minded to ride a-hunting for bears and boars to the Vosges forest, as I have done oft-time." That Hagen, the faithless knight, had counseled. "Let it be told to all my guests, that we ride betimes. Those that would hunt with me must make them ready. If any choose to stay at home to court the ladies, that liketh me as well."

Then spake Sir Siegfried in lordly wise: "And ye would a-hunting, I'd fain go with you. Pray lend me a huntsman and some brach, and I will ride to the pines."

"Will ye have but one?" spake the king anon. "I'll lend you, an' ye will, four men to whom both wood and paths be known where the game is wont to go, and who will not let you miss the camp."

Then rode the full lusty warrior to his wife, whilst Hagen quickly told the king how he thought to trap the doughty knight. A man should never use such faithlessness.

ADVENTURE XVI. How Siegfried Was Slain.

Gunther and Hagen, the passing bold knights, faithlessly let cry a-hunting in the woods, that with sharp spears they would hunt boars and bears and bison. What might be braver? With them rode Siegfried in lordly guise; many kinds of victual did they take along. At a cool spring he later lost his life, the which Brunhild, King Gunther's wife, had counseled. The bold knight then went to where he found Kriemhild. His costly hunting garb and those of his fellowship were already bound upon the sumpters, for they would cross the Rhine. Never could Kriemhild have been more sorrowful. He kissed his love upon her mouth. "God let me see thee, lady, still in health and grant that thine eyes may see me too. Thou shalt have pastime with thy loving kinsmen. I may not stay at home."

Then she thought of the tale she had told to Hagen, though she durst not say a whit. The noble queen began to rue that she was ever born. Lord Siegfried's wife wept out of measure. She spake to the knight: "Let be your hunting. I had an evil dream last night, how two wild boars did chase you across the heath; then flowers grew red. I have in truth great cause to weep so sore. I be much adread of sundry plans and whether we have not misserved some who might bear us hostile hate. Tarry here, dear my lord, that I counsel by my troth."

He spake: "Dear love, I'll come back in a few short days. I wot not here of people who bear me aught of hate. Each and all of

thy kinsmen be my friends, nor have I deserved it other of the knights."

"No, no, Sir Siegfried, in truth I fear thy fall. I had last night an evil dream, how two mountains fell upon thee. I saw thee nevermore. It doth cut me to the heart, that thou wilt part from me."

In his arms he clasped his courteous wife and kissed her tenderly. Then in a short space he took his leave and parted hence. Alas, she never saw him in health again.

Then they rode from thence into a deep wood for pastime's sake. Many bold knights did follow Gunther and his men, but Gernot and Giselher stayed at home. Many laden sumpters were sent before them across the Rhine, the which bare for the hunting fellowship bread and wine, meat and fish, and great store of other things, which so mighty a king might rightly have. They bade the proud huntsmen and bold halt before a green wood over against the courses of the game, upon a passing broad glade where they should hunt. The king was told that Siegfried, too, was come. The hunting fellowship now took their stand on every side. Then the bold knight, the sturdy Siegfried, asked: "Ye heroes bold and brave, who shall lead us to the game within the wood?"

"Let us part," spake Hagen, "ere we begin the chase. Thereby my lords and I may know who be the best hunter on this woodland journey. Let us divide the folk and hounds and let each turn whithersoever he list. He who doth hunt the best shall have our thanks." Short time the huntsmen bided by another after that.

Then spake Lord Siegfried: "I need no dogs save one brach that hath been trained that he can tell the track of the beasts through the pine woods." Quoth Kriemhild's husband: "We'll find the game."

Then an old huntsman took a good sleuth-hound and in a short space brought the lord to where many beasts were found. Whatso rose from its lair the comrades hunted as good hunters still are wont to do. Whatever the brach started, bold Siegfried, the hero of Netherland, slew with his hand. His horse did run so hard that none escaped him. In the chase he gained the prize above them all. Doughty enow he was in all things. The beast which he slew with his hands was the first, a mighty boar; after which he found full soon a monstrous lion. When the brach started this from its lair, he shot it with his bow, in which he had placed a full sharp arrow. After the shot the lion ran the space of but three bounds. The hunting fellowship gave Siegfried thanks. Thereafter he speedily slew a bison and an elk, four strong ure-oxen, and a savage shelk. His horse bare him so swiftly that naught escaped him, nor could hart or hind avoid him. Then the sleuth-hound found a mighty boar; when he began to flee, at once there came the master of the hunt and encountered him upon his path. Wrathfully the boar did run against the valiant hero, but Kriemhild's husband slew him with his sword. Another huntsman might not have done this deed so lightly. When he had felled him, they leashed the sleuth-hound; his rich booty was soon well known to the Burgundian men.

Then spake his huntsman: "Sir Siegfried, if might so be, let us leave a deal of the beasts alive. Ye'll empty both our hill and woods to-day."

At this the brave knight and a bold gan smile. Then the calls of men and the baying of hounds were heard on every side; so great was the noise that both hill and pine woods echoed with the sound. The huntsmen had let loose full four and twenty packs. Then passing many beasts must needs lose their lives. Each man weened to bring it to pass that men should give him the prize of the hunt; that might not be, for the stalwart Siegfried was already standing by the fire. The chase was over, and yet not quite. Those who would to the camp-fire brought with them thither hides of many beasts and game in plenty. Ho, how much the king's meiny bare then to the kitchen!

Then bade the king announce to the huntsman that he would dismount. A horn was blown full loud just once, that all might know that one might find the noble prince in camp. Spake then one of Siegfried's huntsmen: "My lord, I heard by the blast of a horn that we must now hie us to the quarters; I'll now give answer."

Thus by many blasts of horns they asked about the hunters. Then spake Sir Siegfried: "Now let us leave the pine wood!" His steed bare him smoothly and with him they hasted hence. With

their rout they started up a savage beast; a wild bear it was. Quoth then the knight to those behind: "I'll give our fellowship a little pastime. Let loose the brach. Forsooth I spy a bear which shall journey with us to the camp. Flee he never so fast, he shall not escape us."

The brach was loosed, the bear sprang hence; Kriemhild's husband would fain overtake him. He reached a thicket, where none could follow. The mighty beast weened now to escape from the hunter with his life, but the proud knight and a good leaped from his steed and began to chase him. The bear was helpless and could not flee away. At once the hero caught it and bound it quickly with not a wound, so that it might neither scratch nor bite the men. The doughty knight then tied it to his saddle and horsed him quickly. Through his overweening mood the bold warrior and a good brought it to the camp-fire as a pastime. In what lordly wise he rode to the quarters! Mickle was his boar-spear, strong and broad. A dainty sword hung downward to his spurs. The lord bare also a fair horn of ruddy gold. Never heard I tale of better hunting weeds. One saw him wear a coat of black and silky cloth and a hat of sable: rich enow it was. Ho, what costly bands he wore upon his quiver! A panther's skin was drawn over it for its sweet fragrance' sake. He bare a bow, which any but the hero must needs draw back with a windlass, and he would bend it. His vesture was befurred with otter skin from head to toe. From the bright fur shone out on both sides of the bold master of the hunt many a bar of gold. Balmung he also bare, a good broad sword, that was so sharp that it never failed when 'twas wielded 'gainst a helmet; its edge was good. In high spirits was the lordly huntsman. Sith I must tell you all the tale, his costly quiver was full of goodly darts, the heads a full hand's breadth, on golden shafts. What he pierced therewith must needs die soon.

Thus the noble knight rode hence in hunter's garb. Gunther's men espied him coming and ran out to meet him and took his horse in charge. On his saddle he carried a large bear and a strong. When he had dismounted, he loosed the bonds from feet and snout. Those of the pack bayed loudly, that spied the bear. The beast would to the woods; the serving folk had fear. Dazed by the din, the bear made for the kitchen. Ho, how he drove the scullions from the fire! Many a kettle was upset and many a firebrand scattered. Ho, what good victual men found lying in the ashes! Then the lordings and their liegemen sprang from their seats. The bear grew furious and the king bade loose the pack that lay enleashed. Had all sped well, they would have had a merry day. No longer the doughty men delayed, but ran for the bear with bows and pikes. There was such press of dogs that none might shoot, but from the people's shouts the whole hill rang. The bear began to flee before the dogs; none could follow him but Kriemhild's husband, who caught and slew him with his sword. Then they bore the bear again to the fire. Those that saw it, averred he was a mighty man.

Men bade now the proud hunting fellowship seat them at the tables. Upon a fair mead there sate a goodly company. Ho, what rich viands they bare there to the noble huntsmen! The butlers who should bring the wine delayed; else might never heroes have been better served. Had they not been so falsely minded, then had the knights been free of every blame.

Now the Lord Siegfried spake: "Me-wondereth, since men do give us such great store from the kitchen, why the butlers bring us not the wine. Unless men purvey the hunters better, I'll be no more your hunting-fellow. I have well deserved that they regard me, too."

The king addressed him from his seat with guile: "We fain would do you remedy of what we lack. It is Hagen's fault, who is willed to let us die of thirst."

Then spake Hagen: "Dear my lord, I weened that the hunt should be in the Spessart wood, therefore sent I thither the wine. Though we may not drink today, how well will I avoid this in the future!"

At this Lord Siegfried spake: "Small thanks ye'll get for that. One should have brought me hither seven sumpter loads of mead and mulled wine. If that might not be, then men should have placed our benches nearer to the Rhine."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "Ye noble knights and bold, I wot near by a good cold spring. Let us go thither, that ye wax not

wroth."

To the danger of many a knight was this counsel given. The pangs of thirst now plagued the warrior Siegfried. He bade the tables be borne away the sooner, for he would go to the spring in the mountains. With false intent the counsel was then given by the knights. They bade the game which Siegfried's hand had slain, be carried home on wains. Whoever saw it gave him great laud. Hagen of Troneg now foully broke his troth to Siegfried. When they would hence to the broad linden, he spake: "It hath oft been told me, that none can keep pace with Kriemhild's husband when he be minded for to race. Ho, if he would only let us see it here!"

Bold Siegfried from Netherland then answered: "Ye can well test that, and ye will run a race with me to the spring. When that is done, we call give the prize to him who winneth."

"So let us try it then," quoth Hagen, the knight.

Spake the sturdy Siegfried: "Then will I lay me down on the green sward at your feet."

How lief it was to Gunther, when he heard these words! Then the bold knight spake again: "I'll tell you more. I'll take with me all my trappings, my spear and shield and all my hunting garb." Around him he quickly girded his quiver and his sword.

Then they drew the clothes from off their limbs; men saw them stand in two white shifts. Like two wild panthers through the clover they ran, but men spied bold Siegfried first at the spring. In all things he bare away the prize from many a man. Quickly he ungirt his sword and laid aside his quiver and leaned the stout spear against a linden bough. The lordly stranger stood now by the flowing spring. Passing great was Siegfried's courtesie. He laid down his shield where the spring gushed forth, but the hero drank not, albeit he thirsted sore until the king had drunk, who gave him evil thanks. Cool, clear, and good was the spring. Gunther stooped down then to the flowing stream, and when he had drunken straightened up again. Bold Siegfried would fain also have done the same, but now he paid for his courtesie. Hagen bare quite away from him both bow and sword and bounded then to where he found the spear; then he looked for the mark on bold Siegfried's coat. As Lord Siegfried drank above the spring, he pierced him through the cross, so that his heart's blood spurted from the wounds almost on Hagen's clothes. Nevermore will hero do so foul a deed. Hagen left the spear a-sticking in his heart and fled more madly than he ever in the world had run from any man.

When Lord Siegfried felt the mighty wound, up from the spring he started in a rage. From betwixt his shoulder blades a long spear-shaft towered. He weened to find his bow or his sword, and then had Hagen been repaid as he deserved. But when the sorely wounded hero found no trace of his sword, then had he naught else but his shield. This he snatched from the spring and ran at Hagen; nor could King Gunther's man escape him. Albeit he was wounded unto death, yet he smote so mightily that a plenty of precious stones were shaken from the shield. The shield itself burst quite apart. Fain would the lordly stranger have avenged him. Now was Hagen fallen to the ground at his hands, and from the force of the blow the glade rang loudly. Had he had a sword in hand, then had it been Hagen's death, so sore enraged was the wounded man. Forsooth he had good cause thereof. His hue grew pale, he could not stand; his strength of body melted quite away, for in bright colors he bore the signs of death. Thereafter he was bewailed by fair dames enow.

Kriemhild's husband fell now among the flowers. Fast from his wounds his blood was seen to gush. He began to rail, as indeed he had great cause, at those who had planned this treacherous death. The deadly wounded spake: "Forsooth, ye evil cowards, what avail my services now that ye have slain me? This is my reward that I was always faithful to you. Alas, ye have acted ill against your kinsmen. Those of them who are born in after days will be disgraced. Ye have avenged your wrath too sore upon me. With shame shall ye be parted from all good warriors."

The knights all ran to where he lay slain. For enow of them it was a hapless day. He was bewailed by those who had aught of loyalty, and this the brave and lusty knight had well deserved. The king of the Burgundians bemoaned his death. Quoth the deadly wounded: "There is no need that he should weep who hath done

the damage; he doth merit mickle blame. It had been better left undone."

Then spake the fierce Hagen: "Forsooth I wot not what ye now bewail. All our fear and all our woe have now an end. We shall find scant few who dare withstand us now. Well is me, that to his rule I have put an end."

"Ye may lightly boast you," Siegfried then replied. "Had I wist your murderous bent, I had well guarded my life against you. None doth rue me so sore as Lady Kriemhild, my wife. Now may God have pity that I ever had a son to whom the reproach will be made in after days, that his kindred have slain a man with murderous intent. If I might," so spake Siegfried, "I should rightly make complaint of this." Piteously the deadly wounded spake again: "Noble king, if ye will keep your troth to any in the world, then let my dear love be commended to your grace and let it avail her that she be your sister. For the sake of your princely courtesie protect her faithfully. My father and my men must wait long time for me. Never was woman sorer wounded in a loving friend."

The flowers on every side were wot with blood. With death he struggled, but not for long, sith the sword of death had cut him all too sorely. Then the lusty warrior and a brave could speak no more.

When the lordlings saw that the knight was dead, they laid him on a shield of ruddy gold and took counsel how they might conceal that Hagen had done the deed. Enow of them spake: "Ill hath it gone with us. Ye must all hide it and aver alike that robbers slew Kriemhild's husband as he rode alone a-hunting through the pine wood."

Then Hagen of Troneg spake: "I'll bring him home; I care not if it be known to her, for she hath saddened Brunhild's heart. Little doth it trouble me however much she weep."

ADVENTURE XVII. How Kriemhild Mourned Her Husband And How He Was Buried.

Then they waited for the night and crossed the Rhine. Never had heroes hunted worse. Noble maids bewept the game they slew. Forsooth many good warriors must needs atone for this in after days. Now ye may hear a tale of great overweening and dire revenge. Hagen bade carry Siegfried of the Nibelung land, thus dead, before the bower where Kriemhild lodged. He bade place him stealthily against the door, that she might find him when she went forth before the break of day to matins, which Lady Kriemhild full seldom missed through sleep.

Men rang the minster bells according to their custom. Lady Kriemhild, the fair, now waked her many maids and bade them bring a light and her vesture, too. Then came a chamberlain and found Siegfried there. He saw him red with blood, his clothes all wet. He wist not it was his lord, but with the light in his hand he hastened to the bower and through this Lady Kriemhild learned the baneful tale. As she would set out with her ladies for the minster, the chamberlain spake: "Pray stay your feet, there doth lie before the chamber a knight, slain unto death."

Kriemhild gan make passing sore wail, or ever she heard aright that it was her husband. She began to think of Hagen's question, of how he might protect him. Then first she suffered dole; she renounced all pleasure at his death. To the earth she sank, not a word she spake, and here they found lying the hapless fair. Passing great grew Kriemhild's woe. After her faint, she shrieked, that all the chamber rang. Then her meiny said: "Perchance it is a stranger knight."

The blood gushed from her mouth, from dole of heart; she spake: "'Tis Siegfried, mine own dear husband. Brunhild hath counseled this and Hagen hath done the deed."

The lady bade them lead her to where the hero lay. With her white hand she raised his head, and though it was red with blood, she knew him soon. There lay the hero of the Nibelung land in piteous guise. The gracious queen cried sadly: "Oh, woe is me of my sorrow! Thy shield is not carved with swords, thou liest murdered here. Wist I who hath done the deed, I'd ever plot his death."

All her maids made mourn and wailed with their dear lady, for they grieved full sore for their noble lord whom they had lost. Hagen had cruelly avenged the wrath of Brunhild.

Then spake the grief-stricken dame: "Go now and wake with haste all Siegfried's men. Tell Siegmund also of my grief, mayhap he'll help me bewail brave Siegfried."

A messenger ran quickly to where lay Siegfried's warriors from the Nibelung land, and with his baleful tidings stole their joy. They could scarce believe it, till they heard the weeping. Right soon the messenger came to where the king did lie. Siegmund, the lord, was not asleep. I throw his heart did tell him what had happened. Never again might he see his dear son alive.

"Awake, Sir Siegmund; Kriemhild, my lady, bade me go to fetch you. A wrong hath been done her that doth cut her to the heart, more than all other ills. Ye must help her mourn, for much it doth concern you."

Siegmund sat up; he spake: "What are fair Kriemhild's ills, of which thou tellest me?"

Weeping the messenger spake: "I cannot hide them from you; alas, bold Siegfried of Netherland is slain."

Quoth Siegmund: "For my sake let be this jesting and such evil tales, that thou shouldst tell any that he be dead, for I might never bewail him fully before my death."

"If ye will believe naught of what ye hear me say, then you may hear yourself Kriemhild and all her maids bewailing Siegfried's death."

Siegmund then was sore affrighted, as indeed he had great need. He and a hundred of his men sprang from their beds and grasped with their hands their long sharp swords. In sorrow they ran toward the sound of wail. Then came a thousand men-at-arms, bold Siegfried's men. When they heard the ladies wail so pitifully, some first grew ware that they should dress them. Forsooth they lost their wits for very sorrow. Great heaviness was buried in their hearts.

Then King Siegmund came to where he found Kriemhild. He spake: "Alas for the journey hither to this land! Who hath so foully bereft me of my child and you of your husband among such good friends?"

"Oh, if I knew him," spake the noble wife, "neither my heart nor soul would ever wish him well. I would plan such ill against him that his kin must ever weep because of me."

Around the prince Lord Siegmund threw his arms. So great grew the sorrow of his kin, that the palace, the hall, and the town of Worms resounded from the mighty wail and weeping. None might now comfort Siegfried's wife. They stripped off the clothes from his fair body; they washed his wounds and laid him on the bier. Woe were his people from their mighty grief. Then spake his warriors from the Nibelung land: "Our hands be ever ready to avenge him; he liveth in this castle who hath done the deed."

All of Siegfried's men hastened then to arms. These chosen knights came with their shields, eleven hundred men-at-arms, whom Lord Siegmund had in his troop. He would fain avenge the death of his son, as indeed he had great need. They wist not to whom they should address their strife, unless it be to Gunther and his men, with whom Lord Siegfried had ridden to the hunt.

Kriemhild saw them armed, which rued her sore. However great her grief and how dire her need, yet she did so mightily fear the death of the Nibelungs at the hands of her brothers' liegemen, that she tried to hinder it. In kindly wise she warned them, as kinsmen do to loving kin. The grief-stricken woman spake: "My Lord Siegmund, what will ye do? Ye wot naught aright; forsooth King Gunther hath so many valiant men, ye will all be lost, and ye would encounter these knights."

With their shields uncovered, the men stood eager for the fight. The noble queen both begged and bade that the lusty knights avoid it. When they would not give it over, sorely it grieved her. She spake: "Lord Siegmund, ye must let it be until more fitting time, then I'll avenge my husband with you. An' I receive proof who hath bereft me of him, I'll do him scathe. There be too many haughty warriors by the Rhine, wherefore I will not counsel you to fight. They have full well thirty men to each of ours. Now God speed them, as they deserve of us. Stay ye here and bear with me

my dole. When it beginneth to dawn, help me, ye lusty knights, to coffin the dear husband of mine."

Quoth the knights: "That shall be done."

None might tell you all the marvel of knights and ladies, how they were heard to wail, so that even in the town men marked the sound of weeping. The noble burghers hastened hither. With the guests they wept, for they, too, were sore aggrieved. None had told them of any guilt of Siegfried, or for what cause the noble warrior lost his life. The wives of the worthy burghers wept with the ladies of the court. Men bade smiths haste to work a coffin of silver and of gold, mickle and strong, and make it firm with strips of good hard steel. Sad of heart were all the folk.

The night was gone, men said the day was dawning. Then the noble lady bade them bear Lord Siegfried, her loved husband, to the minster. Whatever friends he had there were seen weeping as they went. Many bells were ringing as they brought him to the church. On every side one heard the chant of many priests. Then came King Gunther with his men and grim Hagen also toward the sound of wail. He spake: "Alas for thy wrongs, clear sister, that we may not be free from this great scathe. We must ever lament for Siegfried's death."

"That ye do without cause," spake the sorrow-laden wife. "Were this loth to you, it never would have happened. I may well aver, ye thought not on me, when I thus was parted from my dear husband. Would to God," quoth Kriemhild, "that it had happened to me."

Firmly they made denial. Kriemhild gan speak: "Whoso declareth him guiltless, let him show that now. He must walk to the bier before all the folk; thereby one may know the truth eftsoon."

This is a great marvel, which oft doth hap; whenever the blood-stained murderer is seen to stand by the dead, the latter's wounds do bleed, as indeed happened here, whereby one saw the guilt was Hagen's. The wounds bled sore, as they had done at first. Much greater grew the weeping of those who wailed afore.

Then spake King Gunther: "I'd have you know that robbers slew him; Hagen did not do the deed."

"I know these robbers well," quoth she. "Now may God yet let his friends avenge it. Certes, Gunther and Hagen, 'twas done by you."

Siegfried's knights were now bent on strife. Then Kriemhild spake again: "Now share with me this grief."

Gernot, her brother, and young Giselher, these twain now came to where they found him dead. They mourned him truly with the others; Kriemhild's men wept inly. Now should mass be sung, so on every side, men, wives, and children did hie them to the minster. Even those who might lightly bear his loss, wept then for Siegfried. Gernot and Giselher spake: "Sister mine, now comfort thee after this death, as needs must be. We'll try to make it up to thee, the while we live."

Yet none in the world might give her comfort. His coffin was ready well towards midday. From the bier whereon he lay they raised him. The lady would not have that he be buried, so that all the folk had mickle trouble. In a rich cloth of silk they wound the dead. I ween, men found none there that did not weep. Uta, the noble dame, and all her meiny mourned bitterly the stately man. When it was noised abroad that men sang in the minster and had encoffined him, then rose a great press of folk. What offerings they made for his soul's sake! He had good friends enow among these foes. Poor Kriemhild spake to her chamberlains: "Ye must now be put to trouble for my sake, ye who wished him well and be my friends. For Siegfried's soul shall ye deal out his gold."

No child, however small, that had its wits, but must go to service, or ever he was buried. Better than a hundred masses were sung that day. Great throng was there of Siegfried's friends.

When that mass was sung, the folk went hence. Then Lady Kriemhild spake: "Pray let me not hold vigil over the chosen knight this night alone. With him all my joys have come to fall. I will let him lie in state three days and nights, until I sate me with my dear lord. What if God doth bid that death should take me too. Then had ended well the grief of me, poor Kriemhild."

The people of the town returned now to their lodgings. She begged the priests and monks and all his retinue, that served the knight, to stay. They spent full evil nights and toilsome days; many a man remained without all food and drink. For those who

would partake, it was made known that men would give them to the full. This Sir Siegmund purveyed. Then were the Nibelungs made acquaint with mickle toil. During the three days, as we hear tell, those who knew how to sing, were made to bear a deal of work. What offerings men brought them! Those who were very poor, grew rich enow. Whatever of poor men there were, the which had naught, these were bid go to mass with gold from Siegfried's treasure chamber. Since he might not live, many thousand marks of gold were given for his soul. She dealt out well-tilled lands, wherever cloisters and pious folk were found. Enow of gold and silver was given to the poor. By her deeds she showed that she did love him fondly.

Upon the third morning at time of mass, the broad churchyard by the minster was full of weeping country folk. They served him after death, as one should do to loving kin. In the four days, as hath been told, full thirty thousand marks or better still were given to the poor for his soul's sake. Yet his great beauty and his life lay low. When God had been served and the chants were ended, much people fought 'gainst monstrous grief. Men bade bear him from the minster to the grave. Those were seen to weep and wail who missed him most. With loud laments the people followed hence; none was merry, neither wife nor man. They sang and read a service before they buried him. Ho, what good priests were present at his burial! Ere Siegfried's wife was come to the grave, her faithful heart was rung with grief, so that they must needs oft sprinkle her with water from the spring. Her pain was passing great; a mickle wonder it was that she ever lived. Many a lady helped her in her plaint.

Then spake the queen: "Ye men of Siegfried, by your loyalty must ye prove your love to me. Let me receive this little favor after all my woe, that I may see once more his comely head."

She begged so long, with griefs strong will, that they must needs break open the lordly casket. Then men brought the lady to where he lay. With her white hand she raised his fair head and kissed the noble knight and good, thus dead. Tears of blood her bright eyes wept from grief. Then there happened a piteous parting. Men bare her hence, she could not walk, and soon they found the high-born lady lying senseless. Fain would the lovely fair have died of grief.

When they had now buried the noble lord, those who were come with him from the Nibelung land were seen to suffer from unmeasured grief. Men found Siegmund full seldom merry then. There were those that for three days would neither eat nor drink for passing grief. Yet might they not so waste away their bodies, but that they recovered from their sorrows, as still happeneth oft enow.

ADVENTURE XVIII. How Siegmund Journeyed Home Again.

Kriemhild's husband's father went to where he found her. Unto the queen he spake: "We must unto our land; by the Rhine, I ween, we be unwelcome guests. Kriemhild, dear lady, now journey with me to my lands. Albeit treachery here in these lands hath bereft us of your noble husband, yet should ye not requite this. I will be friendly to you for my dear son's sake, of this shall ye have no doubt. Ye shall have, my lady, all the power which Siegfried, the bold knight, gave you aforetime. The land and also the crown shall be subject to you. All Siegfried's men shall serve you gladly."

Then the squires were told that they must ride away. A mickle hurrying for steeds was seen, for they were loth to stay with their deadly foes. Men bade dames and maidens seek their robes. When that King Siegmund would fain have ridden forth, Kriemhild's mother gan beg her that she stay there with her kindred.

The royal lady answered: "That might hardly hap. How could I bear the sight of him from whom such great wrong hath happened to me, poor wife?"

Then spake young Giselher: "Dear sister mine, by thy troth thou shouldst stay here with thy mother. Thou dost need no service of them that have grieved thee and saddened thy mood. Live from my goods alone."

To the warrior she spake: "Certes, it may not hap, for I should die of dole whenever I should gaze on Hagen."

"I'll give thee rede for that, dear sister mine. Thou shalt live with thy brother Giseler, and of a truth I'll comfort thee of thy husband's death."

Then answered the hapless wife: "Of that hath Kriemhild need."

When the youth had made her such kindly offer, then gan Uta and Gernot and her faithful kin entreat. They begged her to tarry there, for but little kith she had among Siegfried's men.

"They be all strangers to you," spake Gernot; "none that liveth is so strong but that he must come to die. Consider that, dear sister, and console your mind. Stay with your kinsfolk; ye shall fare well in truth."

Then she made vow to Giseler that she would stay. The steeds were brought for Siegfried's men, sith they would ride to the Nibelung land. Also all the trappings of the knights were packed upon the sumpters. Then the Lord Siegmund hied him to Kriemhild's side. To the lady he spake: "Siegfried's men are waiting by the steeds. Now must we ride away, for I be ill content in Burgundy."

The Lady Kriemhild then replied: "All that I have of faithful kin advise me that I stay here with them; I have no kith in the Nibelung land."

Loth it was to Siegmund, when that he found Kriemhild of this mind. He spake: "Let no one tell you that. Before all my kinsmen ye shall wear the crown with such sovran power as ye did aforetime. Ye shall not suffer, because we have lost the knight. Ride also with us home again, for the sake of your little child. Lady, ye should not leave him orphaned. When your son groweth up, he will comfort your heart. Meanwhile many bold heroes and good shall serve you."

"Sir Siegmund," quoth she, "forsooth I like not for to ride. Whatever fortune, here must I tarry with my kindred, who help me mourn."

These tales can now displease the doughty warriors. All spake alike: "We might well aver that now first hath ill befallen us. If ye would stay here with our foes, then have heroes never ridden to court more sorrowfully."

"Ye shall journey free of care, commended unto God; ye shall be given safe-conduct to Siegmund's land, I'll bid them guard you well. To the care of you knights shall my dear child be given."

When they marked that she would not go hence, then wept all of Siegmund's men alike. How right sorrowfully Siegmund parted then from Lady Kriemhild! He became acquaint with grief. "Woe worth this courtly feasting," spake the noble king. "Through pastime will nevermore hap to king or to his kinsmen, what here hath happened to us. Men shall see us nevermore in Burgundy."

Then Siegfried's men spake openly: "A journey to this land might still take place, if we discovered aright him who slew our lord. Enow of his kinsmen be their deadly foes."

He kissed Kriemhild; how sorrowfully he spake, when he perceived aright that she would stay: "Now let us ride joyless home unto our land, now first do I feel all my sorrow."

Down to the Rhine from Worms they rode without an escort. They were surely of the mind that they, the bold Nibelungs, could well defend them, should they be encountered in hostile wise. Leave they asked of none, but Gernot and Giseler were seen to go to Siegmund in loving wise. These brave and lusty knights convinced him that they mourned his loss. Courteously Prince Gernot spake: "God in heaven knoweth well that I be not to blame for Siegfried's death, nor heard I ever that any was his foe. I mourn him justly."

Giseler, the youth, gave them then safe-conduct. Sorrowly he led them from the land home to Netherland. How few kinsman were found joyous then!

How they now fared at Worms I cannot tell. All time men heard Kriemhild mourn, so that none might comfort her heart nor mind, save Giseler alone; loyal he was and good. Brunhild, the fair, sate in overweening pride. How Kriemhild wept, she recked not, nor did she ever show her love or troth. Lady Kriemhild wrought her in after days the bitterest woe of heart.

ADVENTURE XIX. How The Nibelung Hoard Was Brought to Worms.

When the noble Kriemhild thus was widowed, the Margrave Eckewart with his vassals stayed with her in the land, and served her alway. He also often helped his mistress mourn his lord. At Worms, hard by the minster, they built for her a dwelling, broad and passing large, costly and great, where, with her maids, she since dwelt joyless. She liked for to go to church and did this willingly. Where her love lay buried, thither she went all time in mournful mood (how seldom she gave that over). She prayed the good God to have mercy on her soul. With great fidelity she bewept the knight full oft. Uta and her meiny comforted her all time, but so sorely wounded was her heart, that it booted naught, whatever comfort men did offer her. She had the greatest longing for her dear love, that ever wife did have for loving husband. One might see thereby her passing virtue; until her end she mourned, the while life lasted. In after days brave Siegfried's wife avenged herself with might.

Thus she dwelt after her sorrow, after her husband's death, and this is true, well three and one half years, that she spake no word to Gunther, nor did she see her foeman Hagen in all this time.

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "If ye could compass it to make your sister friendly, then might come to these lands the gold of Nibelung. Of this might ye win great store, an' the queen would be our friend."

The king made answer: "Let us try. My brothers bide with her; we will beg them to bring it to pass that she be our friend, if perchance she might gladly see us win the hoard."

"I trow not," spake Hagen, "that it will ever hap."

Then he bade Ortwin and the Margrave Gere go to court. When that was done, Gernot and Giseler, the youth, were also brought. They tried it with the Lady Kriemhild in friendly wise. Brave Gernot of Burgundy spake: "Lady, ye mourn too long for Siegfried's death. The king will give you proof that he hath not slain him. We hear you mourn all time so greatly."

She spake: "None chargeth him with this. 'Twas Hagen's hand that struck him, where he could be wounded. When he learned this of me, how could I think that he did bear him hate? Else had I guarded against this full well," spake the queen, "so that I had not betrayed his life; then would I, poor wife, leave off my weeping. I'll never be a friend of him that did the deed." Then Giseler, the full stately man, began implore.

When at last she spake: "I will greet the king," men saw him stand before her with his nearest kin, but Hagen durst not come before her. Well he wot his guilt; 'twas he had caused her dole. When now she would forego her hate of Gunther, so that he might kiss her, it had befitted him better had she not been wronged by his advice; then might he have gone boldly unto Kriemhild. Nevermore was peace between kindred brought to pass with so many tears; her loss still gave her woe. All, save the one man alone, she pardoned. None had slain him, had not Hagen done the deed.

Not long thereafter they brought it to pass that Lady Kriemhild gained the hoard from the Nibelung land and brought it to the Rhine. It was her marriage morning gift and was hers by right. Giseler and Gernot rode to fetch it. Kriemhild ordered eighty hundred men, that they should bring it from where it lay hid, where it was guarded by the knight Alberich and his nearest kin. When they saw those from the Rhine coming for the hoard, Alberich, the bold, spake to his friends: "Naught of the treasure dare we withhold from her, sith the noble queen averreth it to be her marriage morning gift. Yet should this never be done," quoth Alberich, "but that with Siegfried we have foully lost the good Cloud Cloak, for fair Kriemhild's love did wear it alway. Now, alas, it hath fared ill with Siegfried, that the hero bereft us of the Cloud Cloak and that all this land did have to serve him."

Then went the warder to where he found the keys. Before the castle stood Kriemhild's liegemen and a deal of her kinsfolk. Men bade carry the treasure hence to the sea, down to the boats; one bare it then upon the waves to the mountains on the Rhine. Now may ye hear marvels of the hoard, the which twelve huge wains, packed full, were just able to bear away from the hill in four days and nights and each must make the trip three times a day. There

was naught else but gems and gold, and had men paid therewith the wage of all the world, not a mark less had it been in worth. Forsooth Hagen did not crave it so without good cause. The greatest prize of all was a wishing-rod of gold. He who knew its nature, might well be master over any man in all the world.

Many of Alberich's kinsmen journeyed with Gernot hence. When they stored away the hoard in Gunther's land and the queen took charge of everything, chambers and towers were filled therewith. Never did men hear tales told of such wondrous store of goods. And had it been a thousand times as much, if the Lord Siegfried were but alive again, Kriemhild would fain have stood empty-handed at his side. No more faithful wife did hero ever win. Now that she had the hoard, she brought many unknown warriors to the land. In truth the lady's hand gave in such wise that men have never seen such bounty more. She used great courtesie; men owned this of the queen. To the rich and the poor she began to give so greatly that Hagen said, should she live yet a while, she would gain so many a man for her service that they would fare full ill.

Then spake King Gunther: "Her life and her goods be hers. How shall I hinder that she do with them as she will? Forsooth I hardly compassed it, that she became thus much my friend. Let us not reck to whom she deal out her silver and her gold."

Spake Hagen to the king: "No doughty man should leave to any wife aught of the heard. With her gifts she'll bring about the day when it well may rue the brave Burgundians sore."

Then spake King Gunther: "I swore an oath, that nevermore would I do her harm, and will keep it further, for she is my sister."

Spake then Hagen: "Let me be the guilty one."

Few of their oaths were kept. From the widow they took the mighty store and Hagen made him master of all the keys. This vexed her brother Gernot, when he heard the tale aright. Lord Giselher spake: "Hagen hath done my sister much of harm; I should prevent it. It would cost him his life, were he not my kin."

Siegfried's wife shed tears anew. Then spake the Lord Gernot: "Or ever we be imperiled by the gold, we should have it sunk entirely in the Rhine, that it belong to none."

Full pitifully she went before her brother Giselher. She spake: "Dear brother, thou shouldst think of me and be the guardian of both my life and goods."

Quoth he then to the lady: "That shall be done when we return again, for now we think to ride."

The king and his kindred voided then the land, the very best among them that one might find. Only Hagen alone remained at home, through the hatred he bare to Kriemhild, and did so willingly. Before the king was come again, Hagen had taken the treasure quite and sunk it all at Loche, in the Rhine. He weened to use it, but that might not be. The lordings came again and with them many men. With her maids and ladies Kriemhild gan bewail her passing loss, for sore it grieved them. Gladly would Giselher have helped in all good faith. All spake alike: "He hath done wrong."

Hagen avoided the princes' wrath, until he gained their favor. They did him naught, but Kriemhild might never have borne him greater hate. Before Hagen of Troneg thus hid the treasure, they had sworn with mighty oaths that it should lie concealed as long as any one of them might live. Later they could not give it to themselves or any other.

Kriemhild's mind was heavy with fresh sorrow over her husband's end, and because they had taken from her all her wealth. Her plaints ceased not in all her life, down to her latest day. After Siegfried's death, and this is true, she dwelt with many a grief full thirteen years, that she could not forget the warrior's death. She was true to him, as most folk owned.

ADVENTURE XX. How King Etzel Sent To Burgundy For Kriemhild.

That was in a time when Lady Helca died and the king Etzel sought another wife, that his friends advised his marriage to a proud widow in the Burgundian land, hight Lady Kriemhild. Since fair Helca was dead, they spake: "Would ye gain a noble wife, the highest and the best king ever won, then take this same lady; the stalwart Siegfried was her husband."

Then spake the mighty king: "How might that chance, sith I am heathen and be christened not a whit, whereas the lady is a Christian and therefore would not plight her troth? It would be a marvel, and that ever happed."

The doughty warriors answered: "What if she do it, perchance, for the sake of your high name and your mickle goods? One should at least make a trial for the noble dame. Well may ye love the stately fair."

The noble king then spake: "Which of you be acquaint with the people and the land by the Rhine?"

Up spake then the good knight Rudeger of Bechelaren: "I have known from a child the three noble and lordly kings, Gunther and Gernot, the noble knights and good; the third hight Giselher. Each of them doth use the highest honors and courtesie, as their forebears, too, have always done."

Then answered Etzel: "Friend, I prithee, tell me whether she should wear the crown in this my land. An' she be so fair, as hath been told me, it shall never rue my dearest kin."

"She compareth well in beauty with my Lady Helca, the royal queen. Certes, there might not be in all this world a king's bride more fair. He may well be of good cheer to whom she plight her troth."

He spake: "So bring it to pass, Rudeger, as I be dear to thee; and if ever I do lie at Kriemhild's side, I will requite thee for it as best I may. Then hast thou done my will in fullest wise. From my treasure chambers I will bid thee be given such store of horses, of clothes and all thou wilt, that thou and thy fellowship may live full merrily. I'll bid full plenty of these things be made ready against thine errand."

To this the lordly margrave Rudeger replied: "Craved I thy goods, that were not worthy of praise. With mine own goods, which I have from thy hands, will I gladly be thy envoy to the Rhine."

Then spake the mighty king: "Now when wilt thou ride for the fair? May God keep thee and my lady in all worship on the journey. May fortune help me, that she look with favor on my suit."

Rudeger made answer: "Ere we void the land, we must first make ready arms and trappings, that we may stand with honor before princes. I will lead to the Rhine five hundred stately men, that wherever in Burgundy I and mine be seen, all may say of thee: 'Never did any king send afar so many men in better wise than thou hast done to the Rhine.' If thou, O mighty king, wilt not turn back on this account, I'll tell thee that her noble love was subject unto Siegfried, Siegmund's son. Him thou hast seen here. Men could in right truth ascribe to him great worship."

Then spake King Etzel: "Tho' she was the warrior's wife, yet was the noble prince so peerless that I should not disdain the queen. She liketh me well for her passing beauty."

The margrave answered: "Then I will tell thee that we will start hence in four and twenty days. I'll send word to Gotelind, my dear lady, that I myself will be the messenger to Kriemhild."

Rudeger sent word to Bechelaren, at which the margravine grew both sorrowful and proud. He told her he should woo for the king a wife. Lovingly she thought on Helca, the fair. When the margravine heard the message, a deal she rued it; weeping beseemed her at the thought whether she should gain a lady as afore. When she thought on Helca, it grieved her heart full sore.

Rudeger should ride in seven days from Hungary; lusty and merry King Etzel was at this. There in the town of Vienna men prepared their weeds. Then might he no longer delay his journey. At Bechelaren Gotelind awaited him; the young margravine, too, Rudeger's child, gladly saw her father and his men. Many fair maids awaited them with joy. Ere the noble Rudeger rode from the city of Vienna to Bechelaren, all their clothes were placed upon the sumpters. They journeyed in such wise that not a whit was taken from them.

When they were come to the town of Bechelaren, the host full lovingly bade lodge his fellowship and ease them well. The noble Gotelind saw the host come gladly, as likewise his dear daughter did, the young margravine. To her his coming could not be liefer. How fain she was to see the heroes from the Hunnish land! With

smiling mien the noble maiden spake: "Now be my father and his men full welcome here."

Then great thanks were given to the young margravine by many a doughty knight in courteous wise. Well wot Gotelind Sir Rudeger's mood. When at night she lay close by his side, what kindly questions the margravine put, whither the king of the Huns had sent him. He spake: "My Lady Gotelind, I'll gladly make this known to thee. I must woo another lady for my lord, sith that the fair Helca hath died. I will ride for Kriemhild to the Rhine; she shall become a mighty queen here among the Huns."

"Would to God," spake Gotelind, "an' that might hap, sith we do hear such speech of her many honors, that she might perchance replace our lady for us in our old age, and that we might be fain to let her wear the crown in Hungary."

Then spake the margrave: "My love, ye must offer to those who are to ride with me to the Rhine, your goods in loving wise. When heroes travel richly, then are they of lofty mood."

She spake: "There be none that taketh gladly from my hand, to whom I would not give what well besemeth him, or ever ye and your men part hence."

Quoth the margrave: "That doth like me well."

Ho, what rich cloths of silk were borne from their treasure chambers! With enow of this the clothing of the noble warriors was busily lined from the neck down to their spurs. Rudeger had chosen only men that pleased him well.

On the seventh morning the host and his warriors rode forth from Bechelaren. Weapons and clothes a plenty they took with them through the Bavarian land. Seldom did men assail them on the highways for robbery's sake, and within twelve days they reached the Rhine. Then might the tidings not be hid; men told it to the king and to his liegemen, that stranger guests were come. The host gan say, if any knew them, he should tell him so. One saw their sumpters bear right heavy loads. 'Twas seen that they were passing rich.

Anon in the broad town men purveyed them quarters. When that the many strangers had been lodged, these same lords were gazed upon full oft. The people wondered from whence these warriors were come to the Rhine. The host now sent for Hagen, if perchance they might be known to him. Then spake the knight of Troneg: "None of them have I ever seen, but when we now gaze upon them, I can tell you well from whence they ride hither to this land. They must indeed be strangers, an' I know them not full soon."

Lodgings were now taken for the guests. The envoy and his fellowship were come in passing costly vesture. To the court they rode wearing good garments, cut in full cunning wise. Then spake the doughty Hagen: "As well as I can tell, for I have not seen the lord long time, they ride as if 'twere Rudeger from the Hunnish land, a lordly knight and a brave."

"How can I believe," spake at once the king, "that the lord of Bechelaren be come to this land?"

When King Gunther had ended his speech, Hagen, the brave, espied the good knight Rudeger. He and his friends all ran to meet them. Then five hundred knights were seen dismounting from their steeds. Fair were the men from Hungary greeted; messengers had never worn such lordly clothes. Then Hagen of Troneg spake full loudly: "Now be these knights, the lord of Bechelaren and all his men, welcome in God's name."

With worship the speedy knights were greeted. The next of kin to the king went to where they stood. Ortwin of Metz spake to Rudeger: "Never have we seen guests so gladly here at any time. This I can truly say."

On all sides they thanked the warriors for their greeting. With all their fellowship they hied them to the hall, where they found the king and with him many a valiant man. The lords rose from their seats; through their great chivalry this was done. How right courteously he met the messengers! Gunther and Gernot greeted the stranger and his vassals warmly, as was his due. He took the good knight Rudeger by the hand and led him to the seat where he sat himself. Men bade pour out for the guests (full gladly this was done) passing good mead and the best of wine that one might find in the land along the Rhine. Giseler and Gere both were come; Dankwart and Folker, too, had heard about the strangers. Merry

they were of mood and greeted before the king the noble knights and good.

Then spake Hagen of Troneg to his lord: "These thy knights should ever requite what the margrave for our sake hath done; for this should the husband of fair Gotelind receive reward."

King Gunther spake: "I cannot hold my peace; ye must tell me how fare Etzel and Helca of the Hunnish land."

To this the margrave now made answer: "I'll gladly let you know." He rose from his seat with all his men and spake to the king: "An' may that be that ye permit me, O prince, so will I not conceal the tidings that I bring, but will tell them willingly."

Quoth the king: "The tidings that have been sent us through you, these I'll let you tell without the rede of friends. Pray let me and my vassals hear them, for I begrudge you no honor that ye here may gain."

Then spake the worthy envoy: "My great master doth commend to you upon the Rhine his faithful service and to all the kinsmen ye may have. This message is sent in all good faith. The noble king bade complain to you his need. His folk is joyless; my lady, the royal Helca, my master's wife, is dead. Through her hath many a high-born maid been orphaned, daughters of noble princes, whom she hath trained. Therefore it standeth full piteously in his land; they have alas none that might befriend them faithfully. The king's grief, I ween, will abate but slowly."

"Now God reward him," spake Gunther, "that he so willingly commendeth his service to me and to my kin. Full gladly have I here heard his greeting, and this both my kindred and my men shall fain requite."

Then spake the warrior Gernot of Burgundy: "The world must ever rue fair Helca's death, for her many courtesies, which she well knew how to use."

With this speech Hagen, the passing stately knight, agreed.

Then answered Rudeger, the noble and lordly envoy: "Sith ye permit me, O king, I shall tell you more, the which my dear lord hath hither sent you, sith he doth live so right sorrowfully in longing after Helca. Men told my lord that Kriemhild be without a husband, that Sir Siegfried be dead. If this be so, then shall she wear a crown before Etzel's knights, would ye but permit her. This my sovran bade me say."

Then spake the mighty king, full courteous was his mood: "And she care to do this, she shall hear my pleasure. This will I make known to you in these three days. Why should I refuse King Etzel before I've learned her wish?"

Meanwhile men bade purvey good easement for the guests. They were served so well that Rudeger owned he had good friends there among Gunthers men. Hagen served him gladly, as Rudeger had done to him of yore. Till the third day Rudeger thus remained. The king sent for his counsel (full wisely he acted) to see whether his kinsmen would think it well that Kriemhild take King Etzel to husband. All together they advised it, save Hagen alone. He spake to Gunther, the knight: "Have ye but the right wit, ye will take good care that ye never do this, tho' she were fain to follow."

"Why," spake then Gunther, "should I not consent? Whatever pleasure happen to the queen, I should surely grant her this; she is my sister. We ourselves should bring it to pass, if perchance it might bring her honor."

Then answered Hagen: "Give over this speech. Had ye knowledge of Etzel as have I, and should she harry him, as I hear you say, then first hath danger happened to you by right."

"Why?" quoth Gunther. "I'll take good care that I come not so near him that I must suffer aught of hatred on his part, an' she become his wife."

Said Hagen: "Never will I give you this advice."

For Gernot and Giseler men bade send to learn whether the two lords would think it well that Kriemhild should take the mighty and noble king. Hagen still gainsaid, but no one other. Then spake the knight Giseler of Burgundy: "Friend Hagen, ye may still show your fealty. Make her to forget the wrongs that ye have done her. Whatever good fortune she may have, this ye should not oppose. Ye have in truth done my sister so many an ill," continued Giseler, the full lusty knight, "that she hath good cause, if she be angry with you. Never hath one bereft a lady of greater joys."

Quoth Hagen: "I'll do you to wit what well I know. If she take Etzel and live long enow, she'll do us still much harm in whatever way she can. Forsooth full many a stately vassal will own her service."

To this brave Gernot answered: "It may not happen, that we ever ride to Etzel's land before they both be dead. Let us serve her faithfully, that maketh for our honor."

Again Hagen spake: "None can gainsay me, an' the noble Kriemhild wear the crown of Helca, she will do us harm as best she may. Ye should give it over, 'twould beseem you knights far better."

Wrathfully then spake Giseler, fair Uta's son: "Let us not all act as traitors. We should be glad of whatever honors may be done her. Whatever ye may say, Hagen, I shall serve her by my troth."

Gloom of mood grew Hagen when he heard these words. Gernot and Giseler, the proud knights and good, and Gunther, the mighty, spake at last, if Kriemhild wished it, they would let it hap without all hate.

Then spake Prince Gere: "I will tell the lady that she look with favor upon King Etzel, to whom so many knights owe dread obedience. He can well requite her of all the wrongs that have been done her."

Then the doughty warrior hied him to where he saw Kriemhild. Kindly she received him. How quickly then he spake: "Ye may well greet me gladly and give me a messenger's meed. Fortune is about to part you from all your woes. For the sake of your love, my lady, one of the very best that ever gained a kingdom with great honors, or should wear a crown, hath sent envoys hither. Noble knights be wooing; this my brother bade me tell you."

Then spake the sorrow-laden dame: "God should forbid you and all my kinsmen that ye make a mock of me, poor woman. What could I be to a man who had ever gained heartfelt love from a faithful wife?"

Sorely she grieved, but then came Gernot, her brother, and Giseler, the youth, and lovingly bade her ease her heart. It would do her good in truth, could she but take the king.

None might persuade the lady that she should marry any man. Then the knights begged: "If ye do naught else, pray let it hap that ye deign to see the messengers."

"I'll not deny," spake the noble dame, "but that I should gladly see the Margrave Rudeger for his passing courtesie. Were he not sent hither, whoever else might be the messenger, never should he become acquainted with me. Pray bid him come to-morrow to my bower. I'll let him hear my will in full and tell it him myself." At this her great laments brake forth anew.

The noble Rudeger now craved naught else but that he might see the high-born queen. He wist himself to be so wise that she could not but let the knight persuade her, if it should ever be. Early on the morrow when mass was sung, the noble envoys came. A great press arose; of those who should go to court with Rudeger, many a lordly man was seen arrayed. Full sad of mood, the high-born Kriemhild bided the noble envoy and good. He found her in the weeds she wore each day, whereas her handmaids wore rich clothes enow. She went to meet him to the door and greeted full kindly Etzel's liegeman. Only as one of twelve he went to meet her. Men offered him great worship, for never were come more lofty envoys. They bade the lording and his vassals seat them. Before her were seen to stand the two Margraves Eckewart and Gere, the noble knights and good. None they saw merry of mood, for the sake of the lady of the house. Many fair women were seen to sit before her, but Kriemhild only nursed her grief; her dress upon her breast was wet with scalding tears. This the noble margrave noted well on Kriemhild.

Then spake the high-born messenger: "Most noble princess, I pray you, permit me and my comrades that are come with me, to stand before you and tell you the tidings for the sake of which we have ridden hither."

"Now may ye speak whatso ye list," spake the queen. "I am minded to hear it gladly; ye be a worthy messenger."

The others noted well her unwilling mood.

Then spake Prince Rudeger of Bechelaren: "Etzel, a high-born king, hath in good faith sent you a friendly greeting, my lady, by messengers hither to this land. Many good knights hath he sent

hither for your love. Great joy without grief he doth offer you most truly. He is ready to give you constant friendship, as he did afore to Lady Helca, who lay within his heart. Certes, through longing for her virtues he hath full often joyless days."

Then spake the queen: "Margrave Rudeger, were there any who knew my bitter sorrow, he would not bid me marry any man. Of a truth I lost the best of husbands that ever lady won."

"What may comfort grief," the bold knight replied, "but married joy. When that any gan gain this and chooseth one who doth beseem him, naught availeth so greatly for woe of heart. And ye care to love my noble master, ye shall have power over twelve mighty crowns. Thereto my lord will give you the lands of thirty princes, all of which his doughty hand hath overcome. Ye shall become the mistress over many worthy liegemen, who were subject to my Lady Helca, and over many dames of high and princely race, who owned her sway." Thus spake the brave knight and bold. "Thereto my lord will give you (this he bade me say), if ye would deign to wear with him the crown, the very highest power which Helca ever won; this shall ye rule before all Etzel's men."

Then spake the queen: "How might it ever list me to become a hero's bride? Death hath given me in the one such dole that I must ever live joyless unto mine end."

To this the Huns replied: "O mighty queen, your life at Etzel's court will be so worshipful that it will ever give you joy, an' it come to pass, for the mighty king hath many a stately knight. Helca's damosels and your maids shall together form one retinue, at sight of which warriors may well be blithe of mood. Be advised, my lady, ye will fare well in truth."

With courtesie she spake: "Now let be this speech until the morrow early, when ye shall come here again. Then will I give you answer to what ye have in mind."

The bold knights and good must needs obey.

When all were now come to their lodgings, the noble dame bade send for Giseler and for her mother, too. To the twain she said, that weeping did beseem her and naught else better.

Then spake her brother Giseler: "Sister, it hath been told me, and I can well believe it, that King Etzel would make all thy sorrows vanish, and thou takest him to be thy husband. Whatever others may advise, this thinketh me well done. He is well able to turn thy grief to joy," spake Giseler again; "from the Rhone to the Rhine, from the Elbe down to the sea, there be no other king as mighty as he. Thou mayst well rejoice, an' he make thee his wife."

She spake: "My dear brother, why dost thou advise me this? Weeping and wailing beseem me better far. How should I go to court before his knights? Had I ever beauty, of this I am now bereft."

To her dear daughter the Lady Uta spake: "Whatever thy brothers counsel thee, dear child, that do. Obey thy kindred and it will go well with thee. I have seen thee now too long in thy great grief."

Then she prayed God full oft to grant her such store of goods that she might have gold, silver, and clothes to give, as at her husband's side of yore, when that he was still alive and well. Else would she never have again such happy hours. She thought within her mind: "And shall I give my body to a paynim (I am a Christian wife), forever in the world must I bear shame. An' he gave me all the kingdoms in the world still I would not do it."

Thus she let the matter rest. All night until the break of day the lady lay upon her bed in thought. Her bright eyes never grew dry, till on the morn she went to matins. Just at the time for mass the kings were come and took their sister again in hand. In truth they urged her to wed the king of the Hunnish land; little did any of them find the lady merry. Then they bade fetch hither Etzel's men, who now would fain have taken their leave, whatever the end might be, whether they gained or lost their suit. Rudeger came now to court; his heroes urged him to learn aright the noble prince's mind. To all it seemed well that this be done betimes, for long was the way back into their land. Men brought Rudeger to where Kriemhild was found. Winningly the knight gan beg the noble queen to let him hear what message she would send to Etzel's land. I ween, he heard from her naught else than no, that she nevermore would wed a man. The margrave spake: "That were ill done. Why would ye let such beauty wither? Still with honor may ye become the bride of a worthy man."

Naught booteth that they urged, till Rudeger told the noble queen in secret that he would make amends for all that ever happened to her. At this her great sorrow grew a deal more mild. To the queen he spake: "Let be your weeping. If ye had none among the Huns but me and my faithful kin and liegemen, sore must he repent it who had ever done you aught."

At this the lady's mood grew gentler. She spake: "Then swear me an oath, that whatever any do to me that ye will be the first to amend my wrongs."

Quoth the margrave: "For this, my lady, I am ready."

Rudeger with all his vassals swore that he would ever serve her faithfully and pledged his hand, that the noble knights from Etzel's land would ne'er refuse her aught.

Then the faithful lady thought: "Sith I, wretched wife, have won so many friends, I'll let the people say whatso they choose. What if my dear husband's death might still be avenged?" She thought: "Sith Etzel hath so many men-at-arms, I can do whatso I will, an' I command them. He is likewise so rich that I shall have wherewith to give; the baleful Hagen hath bereft me of my goods."

To Rudeger she spake: "Had I not heard that he were a paynim, gladly would I go whithersoever he listed and would take him to my husband."

Then spake the margrave: "Lady, give over this speech. He hath so many knights of Christian faith, that ye'll ever be joyful at his court. What if ye bring it to pass, that he should let himself be christened? Therefore may ye fain become King Etzel's wife."

Then her brothers spake again: "Now pledge your troth, dear sister. Ye should now give over your sadness."

They begged her till she sadly vowed before the heroes to become King Etzel's bride. She spake: "I will obey you, I poor queen, and fare to the Huns as soon as ever that may be, whenever I have friends who will take me to his land."

Of this fair Kriemhild pledged her hand before the knights.

Then spake the margrave: "If ye have two liegemen, I have still more. 'Twill be the best, that with worship we escort you across the Rhine. No longer, lady, shall ye tarry here in Burgundy. I have five hundred vassals and kinsmen, too; they shall serve you, lady, and do whatso ye bid, both here and there at home. I'll do by you the same whenever ye do mind me of the tale and never feel ashamed. Now bid the housings for your horses be made ready (Rudeger's counsel will never irk you) and tell it to your maids, whom ye would take along, for many a chosen knight will meet us on the road."

She still had harness with which they rode afore in Siegfried's time, so that she might take with her many maidens now with worship, whenever she would hence. Ho, what good saddles they fetched for the comely dames! Albeit they had aye worn costly robes, many more were now made ready, for much had been told them of the king. They opened up the chests, which stood afore well locked. For four and one half days they were aught but idle; from the presses they brought forth the stores that lay therein. Kriemhild now began to open up her treasure rooms, she fain would make all Rudeger's liegemen rich. Of the gold from the Nibelung land she still had such store that a hundred horses might not bear it; she weened her hand should deal it out among the Huns.

This tale Hagen heard told of Kriemhild. He spake: "Sith Kriemhild will not become my friend, so Siegfried's gold must stay behind. For why should I give to my foes such great store of goods? Well I wot what Kriemhild will do with this hoard. I can well believe, an' she take it with her, that it will be doled out to call forth hate against me. Nor have they steeds enow to bear it hence. Hagen doth intend to keep it, pray tell Kriemhild that."

When that she heard this tale, it irked her sore. It was likewise told to all three kings. Fain would they have changed it, but as this did not hap, the noble Rudeger spake full blithely: "Mighty queen, why mourn ye for the gold? King Etzel doth bear you such great love, that when his eyes do light upon you, such store he'll give you that ye can never spend it all; this will I swear to you, my lady."

Then spake the queen: "Most noble Rudeger, never hath king's daughter gained such wealth as that, of which Hagen hath bereft me."

Then came her brother Gernot to the treasure chamber. By leave of the king in the door he thrust the key. Kriemhild's gold was handed forth, a thousand marks or more. He bade the strangers take it; much this pleased King Gunther.

Then spake Gotelind's knight from Bechelaren: "And had my Lady Kriemhild all the hoard that was brought from the Nibelung land, little of it would mine or the queen's hand touch. Now bid them keep it, for I will none of it. Forsooth I brought from home such store of mine that we can lightly do without this on the road, for we be furnished for the journey in full lordly wise."

Aforr this her maids had filled twelve chests at leisure with the very best of gold that anywhere might be. This they took with them and great store of women's trinkets, which they should wear upon the road. Her thought too great the might of Hagen. Of her gold for offerings she had still a thousand marks. For her dear husband's soul she dealt it out. This Rudeger thought was done in faithful love. Then spake the mournful lady: "Where be now my friends who for my sake would live in exile? Let those who would ride with me to the Hunnish land, take now my treasure and purchase horses and trappings."

Then spake the margrave Eckewart to the queen: "Since the day I first became your vassal, I have served you faithfully," spake the knight, "and aye will do the same by you until mine end. I will take with me also five hundred of my men and place them in your service right loyally. Naught shall ever part us, save death alone."

For this speech Kriemhild bowed her thanks; forsooth she had full need.

Men now led forth the palfreys; for they would ride away. Then many tears were shed by kinsfolk. Royal Uta and many a comely maiden showed that they were sad at Kriemhild's loss. A hundred high-born maids she took with her hence, who were arrayed as well befitted them. Then from bright eyes the tears fell down, but soon at Etzel's court they lived to see much joy. Then came Lord Giseler and Gernot, too, with their fellowship, as their courtesie demanded. Fain would they escort their dear sister hence; of their knights they took with them full a thousand stately men. Then came Orwin and the doughty Gere; Rumolt, the master of the kitchen, must needs be with them, too. They purveyed them night quarters as far as the Danube's shore, but Gunther rode no further than a little from the town. Ere they fared hence from the Rhine, they had sent their messengers swiftly on ahead to the Hunnish land, who should tell the king that Rudeger had gained for him to wife the noble high-born queen.

ADVENTURE XXI. How Kriemhild Journeyed To The Huns.

Let now the messengers ride. We will do you to wit, how the queen journeyed through the lands and where Giseler and Gernot parted from her. They had served her as their fealty bade them. Down to Vergen on the Danube they rode; here they gan crave leave of the queen, for they would ride again to the Rhine. Without tears these faithful kinsmen might not part. Doughty Giseler spake then to his sister: "Whenever, lady, thou shouldst need me, when aught doth trouble thee, let me but know, and I will ride in thy service to Etzel's land."

Those who were her kin she kissed upon the mouth. Lovingly they took their leave of Margrave Rudeger's men. The queen had with her many a fair-fashioned maid, full a hundred and four, that wore costly robes of rich, gay-colored silks. Many broad shields were borne close by the ladies on the road, but many a lordly warrior turned then from her.

They journeyed soon from thence down through Bavarian land. Here the tale was told that many unknown strangers had gathered there, where still a cloister standeth and where the Inn floweth into the Danube. In the town of Passau, where lived a bishop, lodgings were soon emptied and the prince's court as well, as they hurried forth to meet the strangers in the Bavarian land, where the Bishop Pilgrim found fair Kriemhild. The knights of the land were little loth, when in her train they saw so many comely maids; with their eyes they courted the daughters of noble knights. Later good lodgings were given the noble guests.

With his niece the bishop rode toward Passau. When it was told the burghers of the town that Kriemhild was come, their prince's sister's child, well was she greeted by the merchants. The bishop had the hope that they would stay. Then spake Sir Eckewart: "That may not be. We must fare further down to Rudeger's land. Many knights await us, for all wot well the news."

Well wist fair Gotelind the tale. She tired her and her noble child with care. Rudeger had sent her word that it thought him good that she should cheer the mind of the queen by riding forth, with his vassals to the Enns for to meet her. When this message had been given, one saw on every side the roads alive; on foot and horse they hastened to meet their guests. Now was the queen come to Efferding. Enow there were from the Bavarian land who might perchance have done the guests much harm, had they robbed upon the roads, as was their wont. That had been forestalled by the lordly margrave: he led a thousand knights or more.

Now Gotelind, the wife of Rudeger, was come; with her there rode many a noble knight in lordly vise. When they were come across the Traun, upon the plain by Enns, one saw erected huts and tents, where the guests should have their lodgings for the night. Rudeger gave the vitaille to his guests. Fair Gotelind left her lodgings far behind her; along the road there trotted many a shapely palfrey with jingling bridle. Fair was the welcome; right well was Rudeger pleased. Among those who rode to meet them on the way, on either side, in praiseworthy wise, was many a knight. They practised chivalry, the which full many a maiden saw. Nor did the service of the knights mislike the queen. When that Rudeger's liegemen met the guests, many truncheons were seen to fly on high from the warriors' hands in knightly custom. As though for a prize they rode before the ladies there. This they soon gave over and many warriors greeted each other in friendly wise. Then they escorted fair Gotelind from thence to where she saw Kriemhild. Scant leisure had they who wot how to serve the ladies.

The lord of Bechelaren rode now to his wife. Little it irked the noble margravine that he was come so well and sound from the Rhine. In part her cares had given way to joy. When she had welcomed him, he bade her dismount with the ladies of her train upon the sward. Many a noble knight bestirred him and served the ladies with eager zeal. Then Kriemhild spied the margravine standing with her meiny. No nearer she drew, but checked the palfrey with the bridle and bade them lift her quickly from the saddle. Men saw the bishop with Eckewart lead his sister's child to Gotelind. All stood aside at once. Then the exiled queen kissed Gotelind upon the mouth. Full lovingly spake Rudeger's wife: "Now well is me, dear lady, that I have ever seen with mine own eyes your charming self in these our lands. Naught liefer might hap to me in all these times."

"Now God requite you," quoth Kriemhild, "most noble Gotelind. Shall I and Botelung's son remain alive and well, it may be lief to you that ye have seen me here."

Neither knew what must needs later hap. Many maidens went to meet each other in courtly wise. The warriors, too, were full ready with their service. After the greeting they sat them down upon the clover. With many they became acquaint, who were full strange to them aforetime. As it was now high noon, men bade pour out wine for the ladies. The noble meiny no longer tarried, but rode to where they found many broad pavilions; there ample service stood ready for the guests.

That night they had repose till early on the morn. Those from Bechelaren made ready for to lodge the worthy guests. So well had Rudeger planned, that little enow they lacked. The embrasures in the walls stood open, the castle at Bechelaren was opened wide. In rode the guests whom men were fain to see; the noble host bade purvey them proper easement. Most lovingly Rudeger's daughter with her meiny went to welcome the queen. There, too, stood her mother, the margrave's wife; many a high-born maid was greeted with delight. They took each other by the hand and hied them hence to a broad hall, fashioned full fair, under which the Danube flowed along. Towards the breeze they sate and held great pastime. What more they did I cannot tell, save that Kriemhild's men-at-arms were heard to grumble that they fared so slowly on their

way, for much it irked them. Ho, what good knights rode with them hence from Bechelaren!

Rudeger offered them much loving service. The queen gave Gotelind's daughter twelve ruddy armlets, and raiment too, as good as any that she brought to Etzel's land. Although the Nibelung gold was taken from her, yet she did win the hearts of all that saw her with the little she still might have. Great gifts were given to the courtiers of the host. In turn the Lady Gotelind offered the guests from the Rhine worship in such friendly wise, that men found passing few of the strangers that did not wear her jewels or her lordly robes.

When they had eaten and should depart, faithful service was proffered by the lady of the house to Etzel's bride. The fair young margravine, too, was much caressed. To the queen she spake: "Whenso it thinketh you good, I know well that my dear father will gladly send me to you to the Hunnish land." How well Kriemhild marked that the maiden loved her truly.

The steeds were harnessed and led before the castle of Bechelaren and the noble queen took leave of Rudeger's wife and daughter. With a greeting many a fair maid parted too. Full seldom did they see each other since these days. From Medelick the folk bare in their hands many a rich cup of gold, in which they offered wine to the strangers on the highway. Thus they made them welcome. A host dwelt there, hight Astolt, who showed them the road to the Austrian land, towards Mautern down the Danube. There the noble queen was later served full well. From his niece the bishop parted lovingly. How he counseled her that she should bear her well and that she should purchase honor for herself, as Helca, too, had done! Ho, what great worship she later gained among the Huns!

To the Traisem they escorted hence the guests. Rudeger's men purveyed them zealously, until the Huns came riding across the land. Then the queen became acquaint with mickle honor. Near the Traisem the king of the Hunnish land did have a mighty castle, hight Zeisenmauer, known far and wide. Lady Helca dwelt there aforetime and used such great virtues that it might not lightly ever hap again, unless it be through Kriemhild. She wist so how to give, that after all her sorrow she had the joy that Etzel's liegemen gave her great worship, of which she later won great store among the heroes. Etzel's rule was known far and wide, so that all time one found at his court the boldest warriors of whom men ever heard, among Christian or among paynim. They were all come with him. All time there were at his court, what may not so lightly hap again, Christian customs and also heathen faith. In whatsoever wise each lived, the bounty of the king bestowed on all enow.

ADVENTURE XXII. How Etzel Made Kriemhild His Bride.

Until the fourth day she stayed at Zeisenmauer. The while the dust upon the highway never came to rest, but rose on every side, as if it were burning, where King Etzel's liegemen rode through Austria. Then the king was told aright how royally Kriemhild fared through the lands; at thought of this his sorrows vanished. He hastened to where he found the lovely Kriemhild. Men saw ride before King Etzel on the road many bold knights of many tongues and many mighty troops of Christians and of paynims. When they met the lady, they rode along in lordly wise. Of the Russians and the Greeks there rode there many a man. The right good steeds of the Poles and Wallachians were seen to gallop swiftly, as they rode with might and main. Each did show the customs of his land. From the land of Kiev there rode many a warrior and the savage Petschenegers. With the bow they often shot at the birds which flew there; to the very head they drew the arrows on the bows.

By the Danube there lieth in the Austrian land a town that men call Tulna. There she became acquaint with many a foreign custom, the which size had never seen afore. She greeted there enow who later came through her to grief. Before Etzel there rode a retinue, merry and noble, courtly and lusty, full four and twenty princes, mighty and of lofty birth. They would fain behold their lady and craved naught more. Duke Ramung of Wallachia, with seven hundred vassals, galloped up before her; like flying birds men saw them ride. Then came Prince Gibeek with lordly

bands. The doughty Hornbog, with full a thousand men, wheeled from the king away towards the queen. Loudly they shouted after the custom of their land. Madly too rode the kinsmen of the Huns. Then came brave Hawart of Denmark and the doughty Iring, free of guile was he, and Irnfried of Thuringia, a stately man. With twelve hundred vassals, whom they had in their band, they greeted Kriemhild, so that she had therefrom great worship. Then came Sir Bloedel, King Etzel's brother, from the Hunnish land, with three thousand men. In lordly wise he rode to where he found the queen. Then King Etzel came and Sir Dietrich, too, with all his fellowship. There stood many worshipful knights, noble, worthy, and good. At this Dame Kriemhild's spirits rose.

Then Sir Rudeger spake to the queen: "Lady, here will I receive the high-born king; whomso I bid you kiss, that must ye do. Forsooth ye may not greet alike King Etzel's men."

From the palfrey they helped the royal queen alight. Etzel, the mighty, bode no more, but dismounted from his steed with many a valiant man. Joyfully men saw them go towards Kriemhild. Two mighty princes, as we are told, walked by the lady and bore her train, when King Etzel went to meet her, where she greeted the noble lordling with a kiss in gracious wise. She raised her veil and from out the gold beamed forth her rosy hue. Many a man stood there who vowed that Lady Helca could not have been more fair than she. Close by stood also Bloedel, the brother of the king. Him Rudeger, the mighty margrave, bade her kiss and King Gibeek, too. There also stood Sir Dietrich. Twelve of the warriors the king's bride kissed. She greeted many knights in other ways.

All the while that Etzel stood at Kriemhild's side, the youthful warriors did as people still are wont to do. One saw them riding many a royal joust. This Christian champions did and paynim, too, according to their custom. In what right knightly wise the men of Dietrich made truncheons from the shafts fly through the air, high above the shields, from the hands of doughty knights! Many a buckler's edge was pierced through and through by the German strangers. Great crashing of breaking shafts was heard. All the warriors from the land were come and the king's guests, too, many a noble man.

Then the mighty king betook him hence with Lady Kriemhild. Hard by them a royal tent was seen to stand; around about the plain was filled with booths, where they should rest them after their toils. Many a comely maid was shown to her place thereunder by the knights, where she then sate with the queen on richly covered chairs. The margrave had so well purveyed the seats for Kriemhild, that all found them passing good; at this King Etzel grew blithe of mood. What the king there spake, I know not. In his right lay her snow-white hand; thus they sate in lover's wise, since Rudeger would not let the king make love to Kriemhild secretly.

Then one bade the tourney cease on every side; in courtly wise the great rout ended. Etzel's men betook them to the booths; men gave them lodgings stretching far away on every side. The day had now an end; they lay at ease, till the bright morn was seen to dawn again, then many a man betook him to the steeds. Ho, what pastimes they gan ply in honor of the king! Etzel bade the Huns purvey all with fitting honors. Then they rode from Tulna to the town of Vienna, where they found many a dame adorned. With great worship these greeted King Etzel's bride. There was ready for them in great plenty whatever they should have. Many a lusty hero rejoiced at prospect of the rout.

The king's wedding feast commenced in merry wise. They began to lodge the guests, but quarters could not be found for all within the town. Rudeger therefore begged those that were not guests to take lodgings in the country round about. I ween men found all time by Lady Kriemhild, Sir Dietrich and many another knight. Their rest they had given over for toil, that they might purvey the guests good cheer. Rudeger and his friends had pastime good. The wedding feast fell on a Whitsuntide, when King Etzel lay by Kriemhild in the town of Vienna. With her first husband, I trow, she did not win so many men for service. Through presents she made her known to those who had never seen her. Full many among them spake to the guests: "We weened that Lady Kriemhild had naught of goods, now hath she wrought many wonders with her gifts."

The feasting lasted seventeen days. I trow men can no longer tell of any king whose wedding feast was greater. If so be, 'tis hidden from us. All that were present wore brand-new garments. I ween, she never dwelt before in Netherland with such retinue of knights. Though Siegfried was rich in goods, I trow, he never won so many noble men-at-arms, as she saw stand 'fore Etzel. Nor hath any ever given at his own wedding feast so many costly mantles, long and wide, nor such good clothes, of which all had here great store, given for Kriemhild's sake. Her friends and the strangers, too, were minded to spare no kind of goods. Whatever any craved, this they willingly gave, so that many of the knights through bounty stood bereft of clothes. Kriemhild thought of how she dwelt with her noble husband by the Rhine; her eyes grew moist, but she hid it full well, that none might see it. Great worship had been done her after many a grief. Whatever bounty any used, 'twas but a wind to that of Dietrich. What Botelung's son had given him, was squandered quite. Rudeger's lavish hand did also many wonders. Prince Bleedel of Hungary bade empty many traveling chests of their silver and their gold; all this was given away. The king's champions were seen to live right merrily. Werbel and Swemmel, the minstrels of the king, each gained at the wedding feast, I ween, full thousand marks, or even better, when fair Kriemhild sate crowned at Etzel's side.

On the eighteenth morning they rode forth from Vienna. Many shields were pierced in tilting by spears, which the warriors bare in hand. Thus King Etzel came down to the Hunnish land. They spent the night at ancient Heimbürg. No one might know the press of folk, or with what force they rode across the land. Ho, what fair women they found in Etzel's native land! At mighty Misenburg they boarded ship. The water which men saw flowing there was covered with steeds and men, as if it were solid earth. The wayworn ladies had their ease and rest. Many good ships were lashed together, that neither waves nor flood might do them harm. Upon them many a goodly tent was spread, as if they still had both land and plain.

From thence tidings came to Etzelburg, at which both men and wives therein were glad. Helca's meiny, that aforetime waited on their mistress, passed many a happy day thereafter at Kriemhild's side. There many a noble maid stood waiting, who had great grief through Helca's death. Kriemhild found still seven royal princesses there, through whom all Etzel's land was graced. For the meiny the high-born maiden Herrat cared, the daughter of Helca's sister, beseen with many courtly virtues, the betrothed of Dietrich, a royal child, King Nentwin's daughter; much worship she later had. Blithe of heart she was at the coming of the guests; for this, too, mighty treasures were prepared. Who might tell the tale of how the king held court? Never had men lived better among the Huns with any queen.

When that the king with his wife rode from the shore, the noble Kriemhild was told full well who each one was; she greeted them the better. Ho, how royally she ruled in Helca's stead! She became acquaint with much loyal service. Then the queen dealt out gold and vesture, silk and precious stones. Whatever she brought with her across the Rhine to Hungary must needs be given all away. All the king's kinsmen and all his liegemen then owned her service, so that Lady Helca never ruled so mightily as she, whom they now must serve till Kriemhild's death. The court and all the land lived in such high honors, that all time men found the pastimes which each heart desired, through the favor of the king and his good queen.

ADVENTURE XXIII. How Kriemhild Thought To Avenge Her Wrongs.

With great worship of a truth they lived together until the seventh year. In this time the queen was delivered of a son, at which King Etzel could not have been more joyful. She would not turn back, until she brought it to pass that Etzel's child was christened after the Christian rite. Men named it Ortlieb; at this great joy arose over all of Etzel's lands. Whatever courtly breeding Lady Helca had possessed, Dame Kriemhild practiced this full many a day. Herrat, the exiled maid, who in secret grieved full sore for Helca, taught her the customs. Well was she known to the strangers and

the home-folk. They vowed that never had a kingdom had a better or more bounteous queen. This they held for true. She bare this praise among the Huns until the thirteenth year. Now wot she well, that none would thwart her, as royal men-at-arms still do to a prince's wife, and that all time she saw twelve kings stand before her. Over many a wrong she brooded, that had happened to her at home. She thought likewise on the many honors in the Nibelung land, which she had there enjoyed and of which Hagen's hand had quite bereft her at Siegfried's death, and if perchance she might not make him suffer for his deed. "That would hap, if I might but bring him to this land." She dreamed that Giselher, her brother, walked often with her hand in hand. Always she kissed him in her gentle slumber; later suffering came to both. I ween, the foul fiend did counsel Kriemhild this, that she withdrew her friendship from Giselher, whom for forgiveness' sake she had kissed in the Burgundian land. At this hot tears again gan soil her robe. Early and late it lay within her heart, how without fault of hers they had made her wed a heathen man. Hagen and Gunther had brought her to this pass. This wish she seldom gave over in her heart. She thought: "I am so mighty and have such great wealth, that I can do my foes an injury yet. Full ready would I be for this towards Hagen of Troneg. My heart doth often yearn for my faithful kin. Might I be with those who did me wrong, my lover's death would be well avenged. Scarce can I abide this," spake Etzel's wife.

All the king's men, Kriemhild's warriors, bare her love in duty bound. Of the chamber Eckewart had charge, which won him friends. None might gainsay Dame Kriemhild's will. All time she thought: "I will beg the king, that he in kindly wise may grant me to bring my kinsmen to the Hunnish land." None marked the evil purpose of the queen. One night when she lay by the king, and he did hold her in his arms, as he was wont to love the noble dame, who was dear to him as life, the high-born lady thought her of her foes. To the king she spake: "Dear my lord, I would fain beseech you, by your grace, that ye would show me that ye did love my kinsfolk, if I have earned the favor."

Then spake the king (true was his heart): "I'll give you to know however well the knights may fare, I may well have joy of this, for never have I won better kin through woman's love."

Again the queen spake: "It hath been well told you, that I have high-born kin; therefore do I grieve that they so seldom reck to see me here. I hear the folk aver that I be banished."

Then spake king Etzel: "Dear lady mine, and it think you not too far, I'll bid hither to my lands, from across the Rhine, whomsome ye be fain to see."

The lady joyed her when she heard his will. She spake: "Would ye show me your faith, my lord, then send envoys to Worms across the Rhine, through whom I may tell my kinsfolk what I have in mind. Thus there will come hither to our land many a noble knight and a good."

He answered: "It shall hap whenso ye bid. Ye might not be more glad to see your kin than I to see the sons of the noble Uta. It doth irk me sore, that they have been strangers to us so long a time. If it please you, dear lady mine, I would fain send my minstrels for your kinsmen to the Burgundian land."

He bade the good minstrels be fetched straightway. Quickly they hasted to where the king sate by the queen. He told the twain they should be envoys to the Burgundian land and bade full lordly weeds be made ready for them. Clothing was prepared for four and twenty warriors, and the message was told them by the king, how they should bid Gunther and his liegemen hither. Kriemhild, the queen, talked with them apart. Then spake the mighty king: "I'll tell you what to say. I offer to my kin my love and service, that it may please them to ride hither to my land. But few such welcome guests have I known, and if they perchance will fulfill my wish, tell Kriemhild's kinsmen that they must not fall to come this summer to my feast, for much of my joy doth lie upon the kinsmen of my wife."

Then spake the minstrel, the proud Swemmel: "When shall your feasting be in these lands, that I may tell it yonder to your kin?"

King Etzel answered: "On next midsummer's day."

"We'll do as ye command," spake then Werbel.

The queen bade them be brought secretly unto her bower, where she then talked with the envoys. From this but little joy happened to many a knight. To the two messengers she spake: "Now earn ye mickle goods, in that ye do my pleasure full willingly and give the message which I send to my native land. I'll make you rich in goods and give you the lordly robes. And if ye see any of my kin at Worms upon the Rhine, ye must not tell them that ye ever saw me sad of heart. Tender my service to the heroes brave and good. Beg that they do as the king doth bid and thus part me from all my grief. The Huns ween, I be without kith and kin. Were I a knight, I'd visit them myself at times. And say to Gernot, too, the noble brother of mine, that none in the world doth love him more. Beg him to bring with him to this land our best of friends, that it may be to our honor. Say also to Giselher, that he remember well, I never gained grief through fault of his. Therefore would mine eyes fain sue him. For his great loyalty I would gladly have him here. Tell my mother also of the honors which I have, and if Hagen of Troneg be minded to stay at home, who then should lead them through the lands? From a child he knoweth the roads to Hungary."

The envoys wist not, why it was done, that they should not let Hagen of Troneg stay upon the Rhine. Later it repented them full sore. With him many a knight was doomed to a savage death. Letters and messages had now been given them. They rode forth rich in goods, and well could lead a sumptuous life. Of Etzel and his fair wife they took their leave, their persons adorned full well with goodly weeds.

ADVENTURE XXIV. How Werbel And Swemmel Brought The Message.

When that Etzel had sent his envoys to the Rhine, these tidings flew from land to land. Through full speedy messengers he begged and bade to his high feasting. From this many a one met there his death. The envoys rode away from the Hunnish land to Burgundy. They were sent thither for three noble kings and for their men, that these should come to Etzel; therefore all gan haste. To Bechelaren they came a-riding, where served them gladly. Rudeger and Gotelind and the child of them twain delayed not to send their service through the envoys to the Rhine. Nor did they let them part hence without gifts, that Etzel's men might fare the better. To Uta and her sons Rudeger sent word that they had no more loyal margrave than he. To Brunhild, also, they tendered service and good wishes, constant fealty and a loving mind. When they heard the speech that the envoys would ride, the margrave begged God in heaven to keep them well.

Before the messengers were quite come through Bavarian land, the doughty Werbel sought out the good Bishop Pilgrim. What word he sent to his kin upon the Rhine, that I know not, but naught but ruddy gold he gave the messengers for love and let them ride.

Then spake the bishop: "And might I see them here, my sister's sons, I should be blithe of mood, for full seldom can I come to them upon the Rhine."

What roads they traveled to the Rhine, I cannot tell. None robbed them of their silver and their weeds; men feared their master's wrath. Certes the noble high-born king was a mighty lord.

Within a twelfth night Werbel and Swemmel came to the Rhine, to the land of Worms. To the kings and their liegemen tidings were told that there came strange messengers. Gunther, the lord of the Rhineland, gan ask: "Who will do us to wit, from whence these strangers ride into our land?"

This none wist, till Hagen of Troneg saw them, who then spake to Gunther: "New tidings be come to us, as I will vouch, for I have seen King Etzel's minstrels here. Them your sister hath sent to the Rhine; for their master's sake we must give them a kindly welcome."

Already they were riding up before the palace; never did a prince's minstrels journey in more lordly wise. Straightway the king's meiny bade them welcome. Men gave them lodgings and bade take in charge their trappings. Their traveling clothes were rich and so well fashioned that with honor they might come before the king, but they would not wear them longer there at court, and asked if there were any that desired them. At the selfsame

moment folk were found who fain would take them, and to these they were sent. Then the strangers donned far better weeds, such as well befitted king's messengers for to wear.

Then Etzel's retainers went by leave to where the king was sitting; men saw this gladly. Hagen sprang courteously towards the messengers and greeted them in loving wise. For this the squires did say him thanks. That he might know their tidings, he can ask how Etzel fared and all his men. Then spake the minstrel: "Never did the land stand better, nor were the folk more merry; now know that of a truth."

To the host they went; the hall was full. There men received the guests, as one must do by right, when kindly greetings be sent to the lands of other kings. Werbel found full many warriors there at Gunther's side. In courteous wise the king can greet them: "Ye minstrels of the Huns and all your fellowship, be ye welcome. Hath the mighty Etzel sent you hither to the Burgundian land?"

To the king they bowed; then spake Werbel: "My dear lord, and also Kriemhild, your sister, do send you loyal service to this land. They have sent us to you knights in all good faith."

Spake the mighty prince: "Merry am I at this tale. How fareth Etzel," so asked the knight, "and Kriemhild, my sister, of the Hunnish land?"

Quoth the minstrel: "This tale I'll tell you; ye should know that never have folk fared better than the twain and all their followers, their kinsmen and their vassals. They joyed them of the journey, as we departed hence."

"Gramercy for his greetings which he hath sent me, and for those of my sister, sith it standeth so that the king and his men live thus in happiness, for I did ask the news in fear and trembling."

The two young princes were now also come, for they had but just heard the tale. For the sake of his sister Giseler, the youth, was fain to see the envoys. He spake to them in loving wise: "Ye messengers, be very welcome to us. An' ye would ride more often hither to the Rhine, ye would find friends here whom ye would be glad to see. Little of harm shall hap you in this land."

"We trust you in all honor," spake then Swemmel. "I could not convey to you with all my wits, how lovingly king Etzel and your noble sister, who live in such great worship, have sent their greetings. The queen doth mind you of your love and fealty, and that your heart and mind did ever hold her dear. But first and foremost we be sent to the king, that ye may deign to ride to Etzel's land. The mighty Etzel enjoined us strictly to beg you this and sent the message to you all, that if ye would not let your sister see you, he fain would know what he had done you that ye be so strange to him and to his lands. An' ye had never known the queen, yet would he fain bring it to pass that consent to come and see him. It would please him well if that might hap."

Then spake King Gunther: "In a sennight I will tell you the tale of what I have bethought me with my friends. Meanwhile hie you to your lodgings and rest you well."

Quoth Werbel again: "And could that be that we might see my lady, the royal Uta, afore we take our easement?"

The noble Giseler spake then full courteously: "None shall hinder that. An' ye would go before her, ye will do in full my mother's wish, for she will gladly see you for my sister's sake, the Lady Kriemhild; she will make you welcome."

Giseler led them to where they found the queen. Gladly she gazed upon the envoys from the Hunnish land. Through her courtesy she gave them gentle greeting. The good and courtly messengers then told their tale. "My lady offereth you of a truth," so spake Swemmel, "her love and duty. Might that be that she could see you oft, ye may well believe she had no better joy in all the world."

Then spake the queen: "That may not be. However gladly I would often see the dear daughter of mine, yet doth the wife of the noble king live, alas, too far from me. May she and Etzel be ever blessed. Pray let me know before ye leave, when ye would hence again; not in a long time have I seen messengers so gladly as I have you." The squires vowed that this should hap.

Those from the Hunnish land now rode to their lodgings. Meanwhile the mighty king had sent to fetch his friends. The noble Gunther asked his liegemen how they liked the speech. Many

a one can say that the king well might ride to Etzel's land. The very best among them advised him this, save Hagen alone; him misliked it sore. Privily he spake to the king: "Ye fight against yourself; ye know full well what we have done. We may well be ever on our guard with Kriemhild, for with mine own hand I slew her husband to death. How durst we ride to Etzel's land?"

Then spake the mighty king: "My sister gave over her wrath; with a kiss she lovingly forgave what we had done her, or ever she rode away. Unless be that the feud doth stand against you alone."

Quoth Hagen: "Now let the messengers from the Huns beguile you not, whatsoever they say. Would ye visit Kriemhild, easily may ye lose there both life and honor. Full long of vengeance is King Etzel's wife."

Then spake Prince Gernot to the council: "Why should we give it over, because ye rightly fear death in the Hunnish lands? It were an ill deed not to go to see our sister."

Then spake Prince Giseler to the knight: "Sith ye know you to be guilty, friend Hagen, ye should stay at home and guard you well, and let those who dare ride with us to my sister."

At this the knight of Troneg grew wroth of mood. "I will not that ye take any with you on the way, who durst better ride to court than I. Sith ye will not turn you, I will well show you that."

Then spake the master of the kitchen, Rumolt, the knight: "Ye can well have the strangers and the home-folk cared for here, after your own desire, for ye have full store of goods. I ween, Hagen hath never given you for a hostage; but if ye will not follow him, Rumolt adviseth you, for I be bound to you in fealty and duty, that for my sake ye abide here and leave King Etzel there with Kriemhild. How might it fare more gently with you in all the world? Ye be well able to stand before your foes; so deck your body out with brave attire, drink the best of wine, and pay court to stately ladies. Thereto ye be served with the best of food that ever king did gain in the world. And were this not so, yet should ye tarry here for your fair wife's sake, before ye risk your life so childishly. Wherefore I do counsel you to stay at home. Your lands be rich, and one can redeem his pledges better at home than among the Huns. Who knoweth how it standeth there? Ye should stay at home, sire, that is Rumolt's counsel."

"We will not stay," quoth Gernot. "Sith my sister and the mighty Etzel have bidden us in such friendly wise, why should we not accept? He that liketh not to go may stay at home."

To This Hagen answered: "Take not my speech amiss, however ye may fare. In all truth I counsel you, would ye guard your lives, then ride to the Huns well armed. Sith ye will not turn you, send for your men-at-arms, the best ye have or can find in any part; from among them all I'll choose a thousand doughty knights. Then Kriemhild's evil mood can bring you naught of harm."

"This rede I'll gladly follow," spake straightway the king. He then bade messengers ride far and wide throughout his lands. Three thousand champions or more they fetched. Little they weened to gain such grievous woe. Full merrily they rode to Gunther's court. Men bade give all that were to ride forth from Burgundy both steeds and trappings. The king gained full many a one with willing mood. Then Hagen of Troneg bade his brother Dankwart lead eighty of their warriors to the Rhine. In knightly guise they came; these doughty men took with them harness and trappings into Gunther's land. Then came bold Folker, a noble minstrel he, with thirty of his men for the journey to Kriemhild's court. They had clothing such as a king might wear. Gunther bade make known, he would to the Hunnish land. I'll do you now to wit who Folker was. He was a noble lord, the liege of many doughty knights in Burgundy. A minstrel he was called, for that he wist how to fiddle. Hagen chose a thousand whom he well knew; oft had he seen what their hands had wrought in press of battle, or in whatever else they did. None might aver aught else of them than doughtiness.

The tarrying irked Kriemhild's envoys sore, for great was their fear of their lord. Daily they craved leave to go; this Hagen would not grant through craftiness. To his master he spake: "We should well guard against letting them ride away, until we ourselves fare forth a sennight later to Etzel's land. If any beareth us ill will, the better shall we wot it. Nor may Lady Kriemhild then make ready

that through any plan of hers, men do us harm. An' this be her will, she'll fare full ill, for many a chosen liegeman had we hence."

Shields and saddles, and all the garments that they would take with them to Etzel's land, were now full ready for many a brave man-at-arms. Now men bade Kriemhild's messengers go before King Gunther. When they were come, Gernot spake: "The king will do as Etzel asked us, we will gladly come to his high feast to see our sister; be no more in doubt of that."

Then King Gunther spake: "Wist ye how to tell us, when this feast shall be, or in what time we should go thither?"

Swemmel replied: "Of a truth it shall be on next midsummer's day."

The king gave them leave (this had not happened as yet), if they would fain see Lady Brunhild, to go before her with his free will. This Folker hindered, which pleased her much. "Forsooth, my Lady Brunhild is not so well of mood, that ye may see her," spake the good knight. "Bide the morrow, and men will let you see her." When they weened to gaze upon her, it might not hap.

Then the mighty prince, who liked the envoys well, through his own courtesie, bade his gold be carried forth on the broad shields of which he had great store. Rich gifts were also given them by his kinsmen Giseler and Gernot, Gere and Ortwin. Well they showed, that they were generous, too. They offered the messengers such rich gifts, that for fear of their lord they durst not take them.

Now spake the envoy Werbel to the king: "Sir King, let your gifts stay here at home. We may carry none away; our lord forbade that we take aught of gifts. Then too, there is but little need."

Then the ruler of the Rhine waxed wroth, that they should thus refuse the gifts of so mighty a king. At last they were forced to take his gold and weeds, the which they later bare to Etzel's land. They would fain see the Lady Uta, or ever they departed hence, so the doughty Giseler brought the minstrels before his mother Uta. The lady sent the message, that whatever honors her daughter had, this gave her joy. Then the queen bade give the minstrels of her edgings and her gold, for the sake of King Etzel and Kriemhild whom she loved. Gladly they took the gifts; in good faith 'twas done.

The messengers had now taken their leave from thence, from wives and men. Merrily they rode away to Swabia. Thither Gernot bade his knights escort them, that none might do them harm. When they parted from those who should have them in their care, Etzel's power did guard them on all their ways, so that none bereft them of either horse or trappings. With great speed they hastened towards Etzel's land. To all the friends they wot of, they made known that in a short time the Burgundians would come hither from the Rhine to the Hunnish land. To the Bishop Pilgrim too, the tale was told. As they rode adown the highway before Bechelaren, men delayed not to tell Rudeger and Gotelind, the margrave's wife. Merry she grew that she should see them. Men saw the minstrels hastening with the tidings. They found King Etzel in the town of Gran. Greeting after greeting they gave the king, of which full many had been sent him. He blushed for very joy.

Happy of mood was the queen, when she heard the tale aright that her brothers should come into the land. She gave the minstrels great gifts as meed. This was done for honor's sake. She spake: "Now tell me, both of you, Werbel and Swemmel, which of my kin are minded to be at the feast? Will the best of those we bade come hither to this land? Pray tell me what Hagen said when he heard the tale."

The minstrel answered: "He came on a morning early to the council, and but little of fair speech he spake thereby. When they pledged the journey hither to the Hunnish lands, that was as words of death to the wrathful Hagen. Your brothers, the three kings, will come in lordly mood. Whoever else may come, this tale I know not of a surety. The brave minstrel Folker vowed to ride along."

"Little do I reck," spake the queen, "whether I ever see Folker here. Of Hagen I be fond, he is a doughty hero. My spirits stand high that we may see him here."

Then the queen went to where she saw the king. How lovingly Dame Kriemhild spake: "How like you these tales, dear my lord? What I have ever craved, shall now be brought to pass."

"Thy wish is my joy," spake then the king. "Never have I been so blithe of mine own kin, when they should come hither to my lands. Through the kindness of thy kinsmen my care hath fled away."

King Etzel's officers bade everywhere palace and hall be purveyed with benches for the guests which were to come. Thereafter the king heard from them mickle weeping.

ADVENTURE XXV. How The Lords All Journeyed To The Huns.

Now let us leave the tale of how they lived at Etzel's court. More high-mettled warriors never rode in such lordly wise to the land of any king; they had whatever they listed, both of weapons and of weeds. The ruler of the Rhineland clad his men, a thousand and sixty knights, as I have heard, and nine thousand footmen, for the courtly feast. Those they left at home bewailed it in after time. The trappings were now borne across the court at Worms; then spake an aged bishop from Speyer to fair Uta: "Our friends would journey to the feasting. May God preserve their honor there."

The noble Lady Uta then spake to her sons: "Pray tarry here, good knights. Me-dreamed last night of direst woe, how all the fowls in this land lay dead."

"Who reckoneth aught of dreams," quoth Hagen, "he wotteth not how to say the proper words, when 'twould bring him great store of honors. I wish that my lord go to court to take his leave. We must gladly ride to Etzel's land. The arms of doughty heroes may serve kings there full well, where we shall behold Kriemhild's feast."

Hagen counseled the journey, but later it rued him sore. He would have advised against it, but that Gernot encountered him with such rude words. Of Siegfried, Lady Kriemhild's husband, he minded him; he spake: "Because of him Hagen will not make the journey to the court."

At this Hagen of Troneg spake: "I do it not from fear. Heroes, when it please you, begin the work. Certes I will gladly ride with you to Etzel's land." Later he carved to pieces many a helm and shield.

The skiffs were now made ready; many a knight stood there. Thither men bare whatever clothes they had. Busy they were until the even tide, then full merrily they set forth from home. Tents and pavilions were raised upon the green beyond the Rhine. When this had happened, the king bade his fair wife tarry with him. That night she still embraced her stately knight. Trumpeting and fluting rose early on the morn, as sign that they should ride. Then to the work they went. Whoso held in his arms his love caressed the fair. Later King Etzel's wife parted them with woe.

Fair Uta's sons, they had a liegeman, brave and true. When they would hence, he spake to the king in secret wise his mind. Quoth he: "I must bewail that ye make this journey to the court." He was hight Rumolt and was a hero of his hands. He spake: "To whom will ye leave your folk and lands? O that none can turn you warriors from your mind! These tidings from Kriemhild have never thought me good."

"Be the land and my little child, too, commended to thy care; serve well the ladies, that is my wish. Comfort any thou dost see in tears. Certes King Etzel's bride will never do us harm."

The steeds were now ready for the kings and their men. Many a one who lived there high of spirit, parted thence with loving kisses. This many a stately dame must later needs bewail. When the doughty knights were seen go toward the steeds, men spied full many ladies standing sadly there. Their hearts did tell them that this long parting boded them great harm. This doth never ease the heart.

The doughty Burgundians started on their way. Then in the land a mighty turmoil rose; on either side of the mountains there wept both men and wives. But however the folk might bear them, the knights jogged merrily along. With them rode the men of Nibelung, a thousand haubers strong, who had left many comely dames at home whom they never saw again. Siegfried's wounds gave Kriemhild pain.

Gunther's liegemen now wended their way towards the river Main, up through Eastern Frankland. Thither Hagen led them, for

well he wot the way. Dankwart was their marshal, the hero from Burgundian land. As they rode away from the Eastern Frankland towards Swanfeld, men could tell the princes and their kin, the worshipful knights, by their lordly bearing. On the twelfth morning the king came to the Danube. Hagen of Troneg rode foremost of them all, giving to the Nibelungs helpful cheer. On the sandy shore the bold knight dismounted and bound his steed full soon to a tree. The river was swollen, the skiffs hidden away. Great fear the Nibelungs had, as to how they might come across, for the stream was much too broad. Full many a lusty knight alighted on the ground.

"Ill may it lightly hap with thee here," quoth Hagen, "O ruler of the Rhine. Now mayst thou thyself see the river is swollen, its flood is mighty. Certes, I ween, we shall lose here many a worthy knight to-day."

"Why dost thou rebuke me, Hagen?" spake the lordly king. "For thine own prowess' sake discomfit me no more, but seek us the ford across to the other bank, that we may take hence both steeds and trappings."

"Forsooth," quoth Hagen, "I be not so weary of life, that I would drown me in these broad waves. Sooner shall men die by my hands in Etzel's lands. That will I well. Stay by the water's side, ye proud knights and good, and I will seek the ferryman myself along the stream, who shall ferry us across to Gelfrat's land."

Then the stalwart Hagen seized his good shield. Well was he armed. The shield he bare along, his helmet bound upon his head, bright enow it was. Above his breastplate he bare a sword so broad that most fiercely it cut on either edge. To and fro he sought the ferryman. He heard the splash of water and began to listen. In a fair spring wise women were bathing for to cool them off. Now Hagen spied them and crept toward them stealthily. When they grew ware of this, they hurried fast to escape him; glad enow they were of this. The hero took their clothes, but did them naught else of harm.

Then spake one of the mermaids (Hadburg she was called): "Sir Knight Hagen, we'll do you here to wit, an' ye give us our weeds again, bold knight, how ye will fare upon this journey to the Hunnish court."

Like birds they floated before him on the flood. Therefore him-thought their senses strong and good; he believed the more what they would tell him. Well they answered what he craved of them. Hadburg spake again: "Ye may safely ride to Etzel's land. I'll stake my troth at once as pledge, that heroes never rode better to any realm for such great honors. Now believe that in truth."

In his heart Hagen was joyous at this rede. He gave them back their clothes and no longer tarried. As they donned their strange attire, they told him rightly of the journey to Etzel's land. The other mermaid spake (Siegelind she hight): "I will warn thee, Hagen, son of Aldrian. For the sake of her weeds mine aunt hath lied to thee. An' thou comest to the Huns, thou wilt be sore deceived. Time is, that thou shouldst turn again, for ye heroes be bidden, that ye may die in Etzel's land. Whose rideth hither, hath taken death by the hand."

Answered Hagen: "Ye deceive us needlessly. How might it come to pass that we should all die there, through anybody's hate?"

Then gan they tell him the tale still more knowingly. The same one spake again: "It must needs be that none of you shall live, save the king's chaplain; this we know full well. He will come again safe and sound to Gunther's land."

Then spake bold Hagen, fierce of mood: "It were not well to tell my lords that we should all lose our lives among the Huns. Now show us over the stream, thou wisest of all wives."

She answered: "Sith ye will not turn you from the journey, up yonder where an inn doth stand, by the waterside, there is a ferryman and elsewhere none."

At once he ceased to ask for further tidings. After the angry warrior she called: "Pray bide a time, Sir Hagen! Forsooth ye are too much in haste. List further to the tale of how ye may cross to the other bank. The lord of these marches beareth the name of Else. His brother is hight Knight Gelfrat, a lord in the Bavarian land. 'Twill go hard with you, an' ye will cross his land. Ye must guard you well and deal full wisely with the ferryman. So grim of

mood is he that he'll not let you live, unless be that ye have your wits about you with the knight. An' ye will that he guide you, then give him his meed. He guardeth this land and is liegeman unto Gelfrat. And cometh he not betimes, so call across the flood and say, ye hight Amelrich. He was a doughty here that; because of a feud did void this land. The ferryman will come when he heareth this name."

Haughty Hagen bowed then to the dames; he spake no more, but held his peace. Then by the river he hid him higher up upon the sandy shore, to where he found an inn upon the other bank. Loudly he began to call across the flood: "Now come and fetch me, ferryman," quoth the good knight, "and I will give thee as meed an arm ring of ruddy gold. Know, that of this passage I have great need in truth."

So noble was the ferryman that it behooved him not to serve, therefore he full seldom took wage of any wight. His squires, too, were full lofty of mood. All this time Hagen still stood alone, this side of the flood. He called with might and main, that all the water rang, for mickle and great was the hero's strength. "Now fetch me. I am Amelrich, Else's liegeman, that because of a great feud did void these lands."

High upon his spear he offered him an arm band, bright and fair it was, of ruddy gold, that one should ferry him over to Gelfrat's land. The haughty ferryman, the which was newly wed himself, did take the oar in hand. As he would earn Hagen's gold so red, therefore he died the sword-grim death at the hands of the knight. The greed for great goods doth give an evil end. Speedily the boatman rowed across to the sandy bank. When he found no trace of him whose name he heard, wroth he grew in earnest. When he spied Hagen, with fierce rage he spake to the hero: "Ye may perchance hight Amelrich, but ye are not like him whom I weened here. By father and by mother he was my brother. Sith ye have bewrayed me, ye may stay on this hither shore."

"No, by the mighty God," spake then Hagen, "I am a stranger knight and have warriors in my care. Now take ye kindly my meed to-day and ferry me over. I am in truth your friend."

The ferryman replied: "This may not be. My dear lords have foes, wherefore I never ferry strangers to this land. If ye love your life, step out quickly on the sand."

"Now do it not," spake Hagen; "sad is my mind. Take this good gold from me as a token of my love and ferry us across: a thousand horse and just as many men."

The grim boatman answered: "'Twill ne'er be done." He raised a mighty rudder oar, mickle and broad, and struck at Hagen (full wroth he grew at this), so that he fell upon his knees in the boat. The lord of Troneg had never met so fierce a ferryman. Still more the boatman would vex the haughty stranger. He smote with an oar, so that it quite to-broke over Hagen's head (a man of might was he); from this the ferryman of Else took great harm. Hagen, fierce of mood, seized straightway his sheath, wherein he found his sword. His head he struck off and cast it on the ground. Eft-soon these tidings were made known to the proud Burgundians. At the very moment that he slew the boatman, the skiff gan drifting down the stream. Enow that irked him. Weary he grew before he brought it back. King Gunther's liegeman pulled with might and main. With passing swift strokes the stranger turned it, until the sturdy oar snapped in his hand. He would hence to the knights out upon the shore. None other oar he had. Ho, how quickly he bound it with a shield strap, a narrow band! Towards a wood he floated down the stream, where he found his sovran standing by the shore.

Many a stately man went down to meet him. The doughty knights and good received him with a kindly greeting. When they beheld in the skiff the blood reeking from a gaping wound which he had dealt the ferryman, Hagen was plied enow with questions by the knights. When that King Gunther spied the hot blood swirling in the skiff, how quickly he spake: "Wherefore tell ye me not, Hagen, whither the ferryman be come? I ween your prowess hath bereft him of his life."

At this he answered craftily: "When I found the skiff hard by a willow tree, I loosed it with my hand. I have seen no ferryman here to-day, nor hath harm happened to any one through fault of mine."

Then spake Sir Gernot of Burgundy: "I must needs fear the death of dear friends to-day. Sith we have no boatmen here at hand, how shall we come over? Therefore I must perforce stand sad."

Loudly then called Hagen: "Ye footmen, lay the trappings down upon the grass. I bethink me that once I was the very best of boatmen that one might find along the Rhine. I trow to bring you all safe across to Gelfrat's land."

They struck the horses, that these might the sooner come across the flood; passing well they swam, for the mighty waves bereft them of not a one. Some few drifted far adown the stream, as did befit their weariness. Then the knights bare to the skiff their gold and weeds, sith there was no help for the crossing. Hagen played the steersman, and so he ferried full many mighty warriors over to the sandy shore, into the unknown land. First he took across a thousand noble knights, then his own men-at-arms. Still there were more to come. Nine thousand footmen he ferried over to the land. Aught but idle was Hagen's hand that day. When he had carried them all safe across the flood, the doughty knight and good bethought him of the strange tales which the wild mermaids had told him afore. For this cause the king's chaplain near lost his life. He found the priest close by the chapel luggage, leaning with his hand upon the relics. Little might that boot him. When Hagen spied him, ill fared it with the hapless priest; he threw him from the skiff in haste. Enow of them called out: "Hold on, Sir Hagen, hold!"

Giselher, the youth, gan rage, but Hagen let none come between. Then spake Sir Gernot of Burgundy: "What availeth you now, Hagen, the chaplain's death? Had another done the deed, 'twould have irked you sore. For what cause have ye sworn enmity to the priest?"

The clerk now tried to swim with might and main, for he would fain save his life, if perchance any there would help him. That might not be, for the stalwart Hagen was wroth of mood. He thrust him to the bottom, the which thought no one good. When the poor priest saw naught of help, he turned him back again. Sore was he discomfited, but though he could not swim, yet did God's hand help him, so that he came safe and sound to the land again. There the poor clerk stood and shook his robe. Hagen marked thereby that naught might avail against the tidings which the wild mermaids told him. Him-thought: "These knights must lose their lives."

When the liegemen of the three kings unloaded the skiff and had borne all away which they had upon it, Hagen brake it to pieces and threw it in the flood, at which the bold knights and good did marvel much.

"Wherefore do ye that, brother," quoth Dankwart, "how shall we come over, when we ride homeward from the Huns, back to the Rhine?"

Later Hagen told him that might not be. The hero of Troneg spake: "I do it in the hope that if we have a coward on this journey, who through faint-heartedness would run away, that in this stream he may die a shameful death."

They had with them from Burgundy land a hero of his hands, the which was named Folker. Wisely he spake all his mind. Whatever Hagen did, it thought the fiddler good. Their steeds were now ready, the sumpters laden well. On the journey they had taken no harm that irked them, save the king's chaplain alone. He must needs wander back on foot to the Rhine again.

ADVENTURE XXVI How Gelfrat Was Slain By Dankwart.

Now when all were come upon the shore, the king gan ask: "Who will show us the right roads through this land, that we go not astray?"

Then the sturdy Folker spake: "For this I alone will have a care."

"Now hold," quoth Hagen, "both knight and squire. Certes, methinketh right that we should heed our friends. With full monstrous tales I'll make you acquaint: we shall never come again to the Burgundian land. Two mermaids told me early in the morning that we should not come back again. I will now counsel you what ye do: ye must arm you, ye heroes, for we have mighty foes. Ye

must guard you well and ride in warlike guise. I thought to catch these mermaids in a lie. They swore that none of us would come home safe and sound, save the chaplain alone. Therefore would I fain have drowned him to-day."

These tidings flew from band to band and valiant heroes grew pale from woe, as they began to fear a grewsome death on this journey to Etzel's court. Forsooth they had great need. When they had crossed at Moering, where Else's ferryman had lost his life, Hagen spake again: "Sith I have gained me foes upon the way, we shall surely be encountered. I slew this same ferryman early on the morn to-day. Well they wot the tale. Now lay on boldly, so that it may go hard with Gelfrat and Else, should they match our fellowship here to-day. I know them to be so bold that 'twill not be left undone. Let the steeds jog on more gently, that none ween we be a-fleeing on the road."

"This counsel I will gladly follow," quoth Giselher, the knight; "but who shall guide the fellowship across the land?"

They answered: "This let Felker do; the valiant minstrel knoweth both road and path."

Ere the wish was fully spoken, men saw the doughty fiddler standing there well armed. On his head he bound his helmet, of lordly color was his fighting gear. On his spear shaft he tied a token, the which was red. Later with the kings he fell into direst need.

Trustworthy tidings of the ferryman's death were now come to Gelfrat's ears. The mighty Else had also heard the tale. Loth it was to both; they sent to fetch their heroes, who soon stood ready. In a passing short time, as I'll let you hear, one saw riding towards them those who had wrought scathe and monstrous wounds in mighty battles. Full seven hundred or more were come to Gelfret. When they began to ride after their savage foes, their lords did lead them, of a truth. A deal too strong they hastened after the valiant strangers; they would avenge their wrath. Therefore many of the lordings' friends were later lost.

Hagen of Troneg had well planned it (how might a hero ever guard his kinsmen better), that he had in charge the rear guard, with his liegemen and his brother Dankwart. This was wisely done.

The day had passed away; the night was come. For his friends he feared both harm and woe, as beneath their shields they rode through the Bavarian land. A short time thereafter the heroes were assailed. On either side of the highway and in the rear hard by they heard the beat of hoofs. Their foes pressed on too hard. Then spake hold Dankwart: "They purpose to attack us here, so hind on your helmets, for that be well to do."

They stayed their journey, as though it must needs be; in the gloom they spied the gleam of shining shields. Hagen would no longer keep his peace; he called: "Who chaseth us upon the highway?"

To this Gelfrat must needs give answer. Quoth the margrave of Bavaria: "We seek our foes and have galloped on behind you. I know not who slew my ferryman to-day, but it doth rue me enow, for he was a hero of his hands."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "And was then the ferryman thine? The fault was mine, he would not ferry us over, so I slew the knight. Forsooth I had great need, for I had sheer gained at his hands my death. As meed I offered him gold and trappings, that he ferry me across to thy land, Sir Knight. This angered him so greatly that he smote me with a mighty oar. At this I waxed grim enow. I seized my sword and fended him his anger with a grievous wound. Thus the hero met his death. I'll make amends, as doth think thee best."

"Well I wist," spake Gelfrat, "when Gunther and his fellowship rode hither, that Hagen of Troneg would do us harm. Now he shall not live; the knight must stand for the ferryman's life."

Over the bucklers Gelfrat and Hagen couched their spears for the thrust; each would charge the other. Else and Dankwart rode full gloriously; they tested who they were, fierce was the fight. How might heroes ever prove each other better? From a mighty thrust Hagen was unhorsed by Gelfrat's hand. His martingale snapped, he learnt what it was to fall. The crash of shafts resounded from their fellowship. Hagen, who from the thrust afore had come to earth, down on the grass, sprang up again. I trow,

he was not gentle of mood towards Gelfrat then. Who held their steeds, I know not; both Hagen and Gelfrat had alighted on the sand and rushed together. Their fellowship helped thereby and became acquaint with strife. Albeit Hagen sprang at Gelfrat fiercely, the noble margrave smote from his shield a mickle piece, so that the sparks flew wide. Full nigh did Gunther's liegeman die therefrom. He began to call to Dankwart: "O help, dear brother! Certes, a hero of his hands hath matched me, he will not spare my life."

At this hold Dankwart spake: "I'll play the umpire here."

The hero then sprang nearer and with a sharp sword smote Gelfrat such a blow that he fell down dead. Else then would fain avenge the knight, but he and his fellowship parted from the fray with scathe. His brother had been slain, he himself was wounded; full eighty of his knights remained with grim death behind upon the field. Their lord must needs turn in flight from Gunther's men.

When those from the Bavarian land gave way and fled, one heard the savage blows resound behind them. Those of Troneg chased their foes; they were in passing haste, who had not weened to make amends. Then spake Dankwart, the knight, in their pursuit: "Let us turn soon on this road and let them ride, for they be wot with blood. Haste we to our friends, this I advise you of a truth."

When they were come again, where the scathe had happened, Hagen of Troneg spake: "Heroes, prove now what doth fail us here, or whom we have lost in the strife through Gelfrat's wrath."

Four they had lost whom they must needs bewail. But they had been paid for dearly; for them a hundred or better from the Bavarian land were slain. From their blood the shields of the men of Troneg were dimmed and wet. Through the clouds there partly broke the gleam of the shining moon, as Hagen spake again: "Let none make known to my dear lords what we have wrought here to-day. Let them rest without care until the morn."

When those who just had fought were now come again, the fellowship was full weary from the way. "How long must we still ride?" asked many a man.

Then spake the bold Dankwart: "We may not find lodgings here, ye must all ride until the day be come."

The doughty Folker, who had charge of the fellowship, bade ask the marshal: "Where may we find a place to-night, where our steeds may rest and our dear lords as well?"

Bold Dankwart answered: "I cannot tell you that, we may not rest till it begin to dawn. Wherever then we find a chance, we'll lay us down upon the grass."

How loth it was to some when they heard this tale! They remained unmarked with their stains of warm red blood, until the sun shot his gleaming light against the morn across the hills. Then the king beheld that they had fought. Wrathfully the hero spake: "How now, friend Hagen? I ween, ye scorned to have me with you when your rings grew wet with blood? Who hath done this?"

Quoth he: "This Else did, who encountered us by night. We were attacked because of his ferryman. Then my brother's hand smote Gelfrat down. Else soon escaped us, constrained thereto by mickle need. A hundred of them and but four of ours lay dead in the strife."

We cannot tell you where they laid them down to rest. All of the folk of the land learned soon that the sons of the noble Uta rode to court. Later they were well received at Passau. The uncle of the noble king, the Bishop Pilgrim, was blithe of mood, as his nephews came to his land with so many knights. That he bare them good will, they learned full soon. Well were they greeted, too, by friends along the way, sith men could not lodge them all at Passau. They had to cross the stream to where they found a field on which they set up pavilions and costly tents. All one day they must needs stay there, and a full night too. What good cheer men gave them! After that they had to ride to Rudeger's land, to whom the tidings were brought full soon. When the way-worn warriors had rested them and came nearer to the Hunnish land, they found a man asleep upon the border, from whom Hagen of Troneg won a sturdy sword. The same good knight hight Eckewart in truth; sad of mood he grew, that he lost his weapon through the journey of the knights. They found Rudeger's marches guarded ill.

"Woe is me of this shame," spake Eckewart. "Certes this journey of the Burgundians rueth me full sore. My joy hath fled, sith I

lost Knight Siegfried. Alas, Sir Rudeger, how I have acted toward thee!"

When Hagen heard the noble warrior's plight, he gave him back his sword and six red arm bands. "These keep, Sir Knight, as a token that thou art my friend. A bold knight thou art, though thou standest alone upon the marches."

"God repay you for your arm bands," Eckewart replied. "Yet your journey to the Huns doth rue me sore. Because ye slew Siegfried, men hate you here. I counsel you in truth, that ye guard you well."

"Now may God protect us," answered Hagen. "These knights, the kings and their liegemen, have forsooth no other care, save for their lodgement, where we may find quarters in this land to-night. Our steeds be spent by the distant way and our food run out," quoth Hagen, the knight. "We find naught anywhere for sale, and have need of a host, who through his courtesie would give us of his bread to-night."

Then Eckewart made answer: "I'll show you a host so good that full seldom have ye been lodged so well in any land, as here may hap you, an' ye will seek out Rudeger, ye doughty knights. He dwelleth by the highway and is the best host that ever owned a house. His heart giveth birth to courtesie, as the sweet May doth to grass and flowers. He is aye merry of mood, when he can serve good knights."

At this King Gunther spake: "Will ye be my messenger and ask whether my dear friend Rudeger will for my sake keep us, my kinsmen and our men? I will repay thee this, as best I ever can."

"Gladly will I be the messenger," Eckewart replied. With a right good will he gat him on the road and told Rudeger the message he had heard, to whom none such pleasing news had come in many a day.

At Bechelaren men saw a knight pricking fast. Rudeger himself descried him; he spake: "Upon the road yonder hasteth Eckewart, a liegeman of Kriemhild."

He weened the foes had done him scathe. Before the gate he went to meet the messenger, who ungirt his sword and laid it from his hand. The tales he brought were not hidden from the host and his friends, but were straightway told them. To the margrave he spake: "Gunther, the lord of the Burgundian land, and Giselher, his brother, and Gernot, too, have sent me hither to you. Each of the warriors tendered you his service. Hagen and Folker, too, eagerly did the same in truth. Still more I'll tell you, that the king's marshal sendeth you by me the message, that the good knights have passing need of your lodgement."

Rudeger answered with a smile: "Now well is me of these tales, that the high-born kings do reckon of my service. It shall not be denied them. Merry and blithe will I be, an' they come unto my house."

"Dankwart, the marshal, bade let you know whom ye should lodge in your house with them: sixty doughty champions, a thousand good knights, and nine thousand men-at-arms."

Merry of mood grew Rudeger; he spake: "Now well is me of these guests, that these noble warriors be coming to my house, whom I have served as yet full seldom. Now ride ye forth for to meet them, my kinsmen and my men."

Knights and squires now hied them to their horses; it thought them right, which their lord did bid. All the more they hastened with their service. As yet Lady Gotelind wist it not, who sate within her bower.

ADVENTURE XXVII. How They Came To Bechelaren.

Then the margrave went to where he found the ladies, his wife with his daughter, and told them straightway the pleasing tidings he had heard, that the brothers of their lady were coming thither to their house. "My dearest love," quoth Rudeger, "ye must receive full well the noble high-born kings, when they come here to court with their fellowship. Ye must give fair greeting, too, to Hagen, Gunther's man. With them there cometh one also, hight Dankwart; the other is named Folker, well beseen with courtesie. Ye and my daughter must kiss these and abide by the knights with gentle breeding." This the ladies vowed; quite ready they were to

do it. From the chests they hunted out the lordly robes in which they would go to meet the warriors. Fair dames were passing busy on that day. Men saw but little of false colors on the ladies' cheeks; upon their heads they wore bright bands of gold. Rich chaplets these were, that the winds might not dishevel their comely hair, and this is true i' faith.

Let us now leave the ladies with these tasks. Much hasting over the plain was done by Rudeger's friends, to where one found the lordings, whom men then received well into the margrave's land. When the margrave, the doughty Rudeger, saw them coming toward him, how joyfully he spake: "Be ye welcome, fair sirs, and your liegemen, too. I be fain to see you in my land." Low obeisance the knights then made, in good faith, without all hate. That he bare them all good will, he showed full well. Hagen he gave a special greeting, for him had he known of yore. To Folker from Burgundy land he did the same. Dankwart he welcomed, too. The bold knight spake: "Sith ye will purvey us knights, who shall have a care for our men-at-arms whom we have brought?"

Quoth the margrave: "A good night shall ye have and all your fellowship. I'll purvey such guard for whatever ye have brought with you, of steeds and trappings, that naught shall be lost, that might bring you harm, not even a single spur. Ye footmen pitch the tents upon the plain. What ye lose I'll pay in full. Take off the bridles, let the horses run."

Seldom had host done this for them afore. Therefore the guests made merry. When that was done, the lordlings rode away and the footmen laid them everywhere upon the grass. Good ease they had; I ween, they never fared so gently on the way. The noble margravine with her fair daughter was come out before the castle. One saw stand by her side the lovely ladies and many a comely maid. Great store of armlets and princely robes they wore. The precious stones gleamed afar from out their passing costly weeds. Fair indeed were they fashioned.

Then came the guests and alighted there straightway. Ho, what great courtesie one found among the Burgundian men! Six and thirty maids and many other dames, whose persons were wrought as fair as heart could wish, went forth to meet them with many a valiant man. Fair greetings were given there by noble dames. The young margravine kissed all three kings, as did her mother, too. Close at hand stood Hagen. Her father bade her kiss him, but when she gazed upon him, he seemed so fearful that she had fain left it undone. Yet she must needs perform what the host now bade her do. Her color changed first pale then red. Dankwart, too, she kissed, and then the minstrel. For his great prowess was this greeting given. The young margravine took by the hand Knight Giseler of the Burgundian land. The same her mother did to Gunther, the valiant man. Full merrily they went hence with the heroes. The host walked at Gernot's side into a broad hall, where the knights and ladies sate them down. Soon they bade pour out for the guests good wine. Certes, heroes might never be better purveyed than they. Rudeger's daughter was gazed upon with loving glances, so fair she was. Forsooth many a good knight carressed her in his mind. And well did she deserve this, so high she was of mood. The knights thought what they would, but it might not come to pass. Back and forth shot the glances at maids and dames. Of them sate there enow. The noble fiddler bare the host good will.

Then they parted after the custom, knights and ladies going to different sides. In the broad hall they set up the tables and served the strangers in lordly wise. For the sake of the guests the noble margravine went to table, but let her daughter stay with the maidens, where she sate by right. The guests saw naught of her, which irked them sore, in truth.

When they had eaten and drunk on every side, men brought the fair again into the hall; nor were merry speeches left unsaid. Many such spake Folker, this brave and lusty knight. Before them all the noble minstrel spake: "Mighty margrave, God hath dealt full graciously with you, for he hath given you a passing comely wife and thereto a life of joy. An' I were a prince," quoth the minstrel, "and should wear a crown, I would fain have to wife your comely daughter. This my heart doth wish. She is lovely for to see, thereto noble and good."

Then answered the margrave: "How might that be, that king should ever crave the dear daughter of mine? My wife and I are exiles; what booteth in such ease the maiden's passing comeliness?"

To this Gernot, the well-bred man, made answer: "An' I might have a love after mine own desire, I should be ever glad of such a wife."

Hagen, too, replied in full kindly wise: "My lord Giseler must take a wife. The margravine is of such high kin that I and all his liegemen would gladly serve her, should she wear a crown in Burgundy land."

This speech thought Rudeger passing good, and Gotelind too, indeed it joyed their mood. Then the heroes brought to pass that the noble Giseler took her to wife, as did well befit a king. Who may part what shall be joined together? Men prayed the margravine to go to court, and swore to give him the winsome maid. He, too, vowed to wed the lovely fair. For the maiden they set castles and land aside, and this the hand of the noble king did pledge with an oath, and Lord Gernot, too, that this should hap.

Then spake the margrave: "Sith I have naught of castles, I will ever serve you with my troth. As much silver and gold will I give my daughter, as an hundred sumpters may barely carry, that it may please the hero's kin in honor."

After the custom men bade them stand in a ring. Over against her many a youth stood, blithe of mood. In their minds they harbored thoughts, as young folk still are wont to do. Men then gan ask the winsome maid whether she would have the knight or no. Loth in part she was, and yet she thought to take the stately man. She shamed her of the question, as many another maid hath done. Her father Rudeger counseled her to answer yes, and gladly take him. In a trice young Giseler was at her side, and clasped her in his white hands, albeit but little time she might enjoy him.

Then Spake the margrave: "Ye noble and mighty kings, when ye now ride again (that is the custom) home to Burgundy, I will give you my child, that ye may take her with you."

This then they vowed. Now men must needs give over all the noisy joy. They bade the maiden hie her to her bower, and bade the guests to sleep and rest them against the day. Meanwhile men made ready the food; the host purveyed them well.

When now they had eaten, they would ride hence to the Hunnish lands. "I'll guard against that well," spake the noble host. "Ye must tarry still, for full seldom have I gained such welcome guests."

To this Dankwart replied: "Forsooth this may not be. Where would ye find the food, the bread and wine, that ye must have for so many warriors another night?"

When the host heard this, he spake: "Give o'er this speech. My dear lords, ye must not say me nay. Forsooth I'd give you vittale for a fortnight, with all your fellowship that is come hither with you. King Etzel hath taken from me as yet full little of my goods."

However much they demurred, still they must needs tarry there until the fourth morning, when such deeds were done by the bounty of the host that it was told after. He gave his guests both mounts and robes. No longer might they stay, they must fare forth. Through his bounty bold Rudeger wot how to save but little. Naught was denied that any craved, it could not but please them all. Their noble meiny now brought saddled before the gate the many steeds, and to them came forth thee stranger knights. In their hands they bare their shields, for they would ride to Etzel's land. Before the noble guests come forth from the hall, the host had proffered everywhere his gifts. He wist how to live bountifully, in mickle honors. To Giseler he had given his comely daughter; to Gunther, the worshipful knight, who seldom took a gift, he gave a coat of mail, which the noble and mighty king wore well with honor. Gunther bowed low over noble Rudeger's hand. Then to Gernot he gave a weapon good enow, the which he later bare full gloriously in strife. Little did the margrave's wife begrudge him the gift, but through it good Rudeger was forced to lose his life. Gotelind offered Hagen a loving gift, as well befit her. He took it, sith the king had taken one, that he should not fare forth from her to the feasting, without her present. Later he gainsayed it. "Of all that I have ever seen," quoth Hagen, "I crave

to bear naught else save that shield on yonder wall; fain would I take that with me into Etzel's land."

When the margravine heard Hagen's speech, it minded her of her grief—tears became her well. She thought full dearly on Nudung's death, whom Wittich had slain; from this she felt the stress of sorrow. To the knight she spake: "I'll give you the shield. Would to God in heaven, that he still lived who bare it once in hand. He met his death in battle; for him must I ever weep, which giveth me, poor wife, dire woe."

The noble margravine rose from her seat and with her white hands she seized the shield. To Hagen the lady bare it, who took it in his hand. This gift was worthily bestowed upon the knight. A cover of shining silk concealed its colors, for it was set with precious stones. In sooth the daylight never shone on better shield. Had any wished to buy it at its cost, 'twere well worth a thousand marks. Hagen bade the shield be borne away.

Then Dankwart came to court. To him the margrave's daughter gave great store of rich apparel, the which he later wore among the Huns in passing lordly wise. However many gifts were taken by them, naught would have come into the hands of any, save through the kindness of the host, who proffered them so fair. Later they became such foes that they were forced to strike him dead.

Now the doughty Folker went courteously with his fiddle and stood before Gotelind. He played sweet tunes and sang to her his songs. Thus he took his leave and parted from Bechelaren. The margravine bade fetch a chest. Now hear the tale of friendly gifts! Twelve rings she took out and placed them on his hand. "These ye must bear hence to Etzel's land and wear them at court for my sake, whithersoever ye turn, that men may tell me how ye have served me yonder at the feast." What the lady craved, he later carried out full well.

Then spake the host to his guests: "Ye shall journey all the gentlier, for I myself will guide you and bid guard you well, that none may harm you on the road."

Then his sumpters were laden soon. The host was well beseen with five hundred men with steeds and vesture. These he took with him full merrily hence to the feasting. Not one of them later ever came alive to Bechelaren. With a loving kiss the host parted hence; the same did Giselher, as his gentle breeding counseled him. In their arms they clasped fair wives. This many a high-born maid must needs bewail in later times. On every side they opened the casements, for the host with his liegemen would now mount their steeds. I ween their hearts did tell them of the bitter woes to come. Then wept many a dame and many a comely maid. They pined for their dear kinsmen, whom nevermore they saw in Bechelaren. Yet these rode merrily across the sand, down along the Danube to the Hunnish land.

Then noble Rudeger, the full lusty knight, spake to the Burgundians: "Certes, the tidings that we be coming to the Huns must not be left unsaid, for king Etzel hath never heard aught that pleased him more."

So down through Austria the envoy sped, and to the folk on every side 'twas told that the heroes were coming from Worms beyond the Rhine. Naught could have been liefer to the courtiers of the king. On before the envoys hastened with the tidings, that the Nibelungs were already in the Hunnish land.

"Thou must greet them well, Kriemhild, lady mine. Thy dear brothers be coming in great state to visit thee."

Within a casement window Lady Kriemhild stood and looked out to see her kin, as friend doth for friend. Many a man she spied from her fatherland. The king, too, learned the tale and laughed for very pleasure. "Now well is me of my joys," quoth Kriemhild, "my kinsmen bring with them many a brand-new shield and white coat of mail. He who would have gold, let him bethink him of my sorrows, and I'll ever be his friend."

ADVENTURE XXVIII. How The Burgundians Came To Etzel's Castle.

When the Burgundians were come to the land, old Hildebrand of Berne did hear the tale, and sore it rued him. He told his lord, who bade him welcome well the lusty knights and brave. The

doughty Wolfhart bade fetch the steeds; then many a sturdy warrior rode with Dietrich, to where he thought to meet them on the plain where they had pitched full many a lordly tent. When Hagen of Troneg saw them riding from afar, to his lords he spake in courteous wise: "Now must ye doughty warriors rise from your seats and go to meet them, who would greet you here. Yonder cometh a fellowship I know full well, they be full speedy knights from the Amelung land, whom the lord of Berne doth lead—high-mettled warriors they. Scorn not the service that they proffer."

Then with Dietrich there alighted from the steeds, as was mickle right, many a knight and squire. Towards the strangers they went, to where they found the heroes; in friendly wise they greeted those from the Burgundian land. Ye may now hear what Sir Dietrich said to the sons of Uta, as he saw them coming toward him. Their journey rued him sore; he weened that Rudeger wist it, and had told them the tale. "Be ye welcome, fair sirs, Gunther and Giselher, Gernot and Hagen, likewise Folker and the doughty Dankwart. Know ye not that Kriemhild still mourneth sorely for the hero of the Nibelung land?"

"Let her weep long time," quoth Hagen. "He hath lain these many years, done to death. Let her love now the Hunnish king. Siegfried cometh not again, he hath long been buried."

"Let us not talk of Siegfried's wounds, but if Kriemhild still live, scathe may hap again," so spake Sir Dietrich, the lord of Berne. "Hope of the Nibelungs, guard thee well against this."

"Why should I guard me?" spake the high-born king. "Etzel sent us envoys (why should I question more?) to say that we should ride to visit him, hither to this land. My sister Kriemhild sent us many a message, too."

"Let me counsel you," quoth Hagen, "to beg Sir Dietrich and his good knights to tell you the tidings further, and to let you know the Lady Kriemhild's mood."

Then the three mighty kings, Gunther and Gernot and Sir Dietrich, too, went and spake apart. "Pray tell us, good and noble knight of Berne, what ye do know of the queen's mood?"

Answered the lord of Berne: "What more shall I tell you? Every morning I hear King Etzel's wife wail and weep with piteous mind to the mighty God of heaven over the stalwart Siegfried's death."

"That which we have heard," spake bold Folker, the fiddler, "cannot be turned aside. We must ride to court and abide what may hap to us doughty knights among the Huns."

The brave Burgundians now rode to court. In lordly wise they came after the fashion of their land. Many a brave man among the Huns wondered what manner of man Hagen of Troneg be. It was enough that men told tales, that he had slain Kriemhild's husband the mightiest of all heroes. For that cause alone much questioning about Hagen was heard at court. The knight was fair of stature, that is full true; broad he was across the breast; his hair was mixed with gray; his legs were long, and fierce his glance; lordly gait he had.

Then one bade lodge the Burgundian men, but Gunther's fellowship was placed apart. This the queen advised, who bare him much hate, and therefore men later slew the footmen in their lodgings. Dankwart, Hagen's brother, he was marshal. The king earnestly commended to him his followers, that he purvey them well and give them enow to eat; The hero of Burgundy bare them all good will. Kriemhild, the fair, went with her maids-in-waiting to where, false of mood, she greeted the Nibelungs. Giselher alone she kissed and took by the hand. That Hagen of Troneg saw, and bound his helmet tighter. "After such a greeting," quoth Hagen, "doughty knights may well bethink them. One giveth kings a greeting different from their men. We have not made a good journey to this feast."

She spake: "Be welcome to him that be fain to see you; I greet you not for your kinship. Pray tell me what ye do bring me from Worms beyond the Rhine, that ye should be so passing welcome to me here?"

"Had I known," quoth Hagen, "that knights should bring you gifts, I had bethought me better, for I be rich enow to bring you presents hither to this land."

"Now let me hear the tale of where ye have put the Nibelung hoard? It was mine own, as ye well know, and ye should have brought me that to Etzel's land."

"T' faith, my Lady Kriemhild, it is many a day sith I have had the care of the Nibelung hoard. My lords bade sink it in the Rhine, and there it must verily lie till doomsday."

Then spake the queen: "I thought as much. Ye have brought full little of it hither to this land, albeit it was mine own, and I had it whilom in my care. Therefore have I all time so many a mournful day."

"The devil I'll bring you," answered Hagen. "I have enough to carry with my shield and breastplate; my helm is bright, the sword is in my hand, therefore I bring you naught."

Then the queen spake to the knights on every side: "One may not bring weapons to the hall. Sir Knights, give them to me, I'll have them taken in charge."

"T' faith," quoth Hagen, "never shall that be done. In sooth I crave not the honor, O bounteous princess, that ye should bear my shield and other arms to the lodgings; ye be a queen. This my father did not teach me, I myself will play the chamberlain."

"Alack for my sorrows," spake Lady Kriemhild. "Why will Hagen and my brother not let their shields be taken in charge? They be warned, and wist I, who hath done this, I'd ever plan his death."

To this Sir Dietrich answered in wrath: "'Tis I, that hath warned the noble and mighty princes and the bold Hagen, the Burgundian liegeman. Go to, thou she-devil, thou durst not make me suffer for the deed."

Sore abashed was King Etzel's wife, for bitterly she feared Sir Dietrich. At once she left him, not a word she spake, but gazed with furious glance upon her foes. Two warriors then grasped each other quickly by the hand, the one was Sir Dietrich, the other Hagen. With gentle breeding the lusty hero spake: "Forsooth I rue your coming to the Huns, because of what the queen hath said."

Quoth Hagen: "There will be help for that."

Thus the two brave men talked together. King Etzel saw this, and therefore he began to query: "Fain would I know," spake the mighty king, "who yonder warrior be, whom Sir Dietrich greeteth there in such friendly wise. He carrieth high his head; whoever be his father, he is sure a doughty knight."

A liegeman of Kriemhild made answer to the king: "By birth he is from Troneg, his father hight Aldrian; however blithe he bear him here, a grim man is he. I'll let you see full well that I have told no lie."

"How shall I know that he be so fierce?" replied the king. As yet he wist not the many evil tricks that the queen should later play upon her kin, so that she let none escape from the Huns alive.

"Well know I Aldrian, for he was my vassal and here at my court gained mickle praise and honor. I dubbed him knight and gave hint of my gold. The faithful Helca loved him inly. Therefore I have since known Hagen every whit. Two stately youths became my hostages, he and Walther of Spain. Here they grew to manhood; Hagen I sent home again, Walther ran away with Hildegund."

He bethought him of many tales that had happened of yore. He had spied aright his friend of Troneg, who in his youth had given him yeoman service. Later in his old age he did him many a dear friend to death.

ADVENTURE XXIX. How Hagen Would Not Rise For Kriemhild.

Then the two worshipful warriors parted, Hagen of Troneg and Sir Dietrich. Over his shoulder Gunther's liegeman gazed for a comrade-at-arms, whom he then quickly won. Folker he saw, the cunning fiddler, stand by Giseler, and begged him to join him, for well he knew his savage mood. He was in all things a bold knight and a good. Still they let the lordings stand in the court, only these twain alone men saw walk hence far across the court before a spacious palace. These chosen warriors feared the hate of none. They sate them down upon a bench before the house over against a hall, the which belonged to Kriemhild. Upon their bodies shone their lordly weeds. Enow who gazed upon them would than have known the knights; as wild beasts the haughty heroes were stared upon by the Hunnish men. Etzel's wife, too, gazed upon them through a window, at which fair Kriemhild waxed sad again. Of her sorrows it minded her and she began to weep. Much it

wondered Etzel's men what had so quickly saddened her mood. Quoth she: "That Hagen hath done, ye heroes brave and good."

To the lady they spake: "How hath that happened, for but newly we did see you joyful? None there be so bold, an' he hath done you aught, but it will cost him his life, if ye bid us venge you."

"Ever would I requite it, if any avenged my wrongs. I would give him all he craved. Behold me at your feet," spake he queen; "avenge me on Hagen, that he lose his life."

Then sixty bold men made them ready eftsoon for Kriemhild's sake. They would hence to slay the bold knight Hagen and the fiddler, too. With forethought this was done. When the queen beheld the band so small, grim of mood she spake to the knights: "What ye now would do, ye should give over. With so few durst ye never encounter Hagen. And however strong and bold Hagen of Troneg be, he who sitteth by his side, Folker, the fiddler, is stronger still by far. He is an evil man. Certes, ye may not so lightly match these knights."

When they heard this, four hundred doughty warriors more did make them ready. The noble queen craved sore to do them harm. Thereby the heroes later fell in mickle danger. When she saw her followers well armed, the queen spake to the doughty knights: "Now bide a while, ye must stand quite still in truth. Wearing my crown, I will go to meet my foes. List ye to the wrongs that Hagen of Troneg, Gunther's man, hath done me. I know him to be so haughty that he'll not deny a whit. Little I reek what hap to him on this account."

Then the fiddler, a bold minstrel, spied the noble queen walk down the flight of steps that led downward from a house. When bold Folker saw this, to his comrade-at-arms he spake: "Now behold, friend Hagen, how she walketh yonder, who hath faithlessly bidden us to this land. I have never seen with a queen so many men bearing sword in hand march in such warlike guise. Know ye, friend Hagen, whether she bear you hate? If so be, I counsel you to guard the better your life and honor. Certes, methinks this good. They be wroth of mood, as far as I can see, and some be so broad of chest that he who would guard himself should do so betimes. I ween there be those among them who wear bright breastplates. Whom they would attack, I cannot say."

Then, angry of mood, the brave knight Hagen spake: "Well I wot that all this be done against me, that they thus bear their gleaming swords in hand. For aught of them, I still may ride to the Burgundian land. Now tell me, friend Folker, whether ye will stand by me, if perchance Kriemhild's men would fight me? Pray let me hear that, if so be ye hold me dear. I'll aid you evermore with faithful service."

"I'll help you surely," spake the minstrel; "and should I see the king with all his warriors draw near us, not one foot will I yield from fear in aiding you, the while I live."

"Now may God in heaven requite you, noble Folker; though they strive against me, what need I more? Sith ye will help me, as I hear you say, let these warriors come on full-armed."

"Let us rise now from our seats," spake the minstrel. "Let us do her honor as she passeth by, she is a high-born dame, a queen. We shall thereby honor ourselves as well."

"For my sake, no," quoth Hagen. "Should I go hence, these knights would think 'twas through fear. Not for one of them will I ever rise from my seat. It beseemeth us both better, forsooth, to leave this undone, for why should I honor one who doth bear me hatred? Nor will I do this, the while I live; I reckon not how King Etzel's wife doth hate me."

Haughty Hagen laid across his knees a gleaming sword from whose pommel a sparkling jasper, greener than grass, did shine. Its hilt was golden, its sheath an edging of red. That it was Siegfried's, Kriemhild knew full well. She must needs grow sad when that she knew the sword, for it minded her of her wrongs; she began to weep. I ween bold Hagen had done it for this cause. Folker, the bold, drew nearer to the bench a fiddle bow, strong, mickle, and long, like unto a broad, sharp sword, and there the two lusty knights sate undaunted. These two brave men did think themselves so lordly, that they would not leave their seats through fear of any man. The noble queen walked therefore to their very feet and gave them hostile greeting. She spake: "Now tell me, Hagen, who hath sent for you, that ye durst ride hither to this land,

sith ye know full well what ye have done me? Had ye good wits, ye should have left it undone, by rights."

"No one sent for me," quoth Hagen. "Men bade to this land three knights, who hight my lords. I am their liegeman, and full seldom have I stayed behind when they journeyed to any court."

Quoth she: "Now tell me further, why ye did this, through the which ye have earned my hate? Ye slew Siegfried, my dear husband, for which I have cause enow to weep until mine end."

Quoth he: "What booteth more, enow is already said. It is just I, Hagen, who slew Siegfried, a hero of his hands. How sorely did he atone that Lady Kriemhild railed at comely Brunhild. 'Tis not to be denied, O mighty queen, I alone am to blame for this scathful scathe. Let him avenge it who will, be he wife or man. Unless be I should lie to you, I have dons you much of harm."

Quoth she: "Now hear, ye knights, how he denieth no whit of my wrongs. Men of Etzel, I care not what hap to him from this cause."

The proud warriors all gazed at one another. Had any began the fight, it would have come about that men must have given the honors to the two comrades, for they had oft wrought wonders in the fray. What the Huns had weened to do must now needs be left undone through fear.

Then spake one of the men-at-arms: "Why gaze ye thus at me? What I afore vowed, I will now give over. I will lose my life for no man's gift. Forsooth King Etzel's wife would fain lead us into wrong."

Quoth another hard by: "Of the selfsame mind am I. An' any give me towers of good red gold, I would not match this fiddler, for his fearful glances, the which I have seen him cast. Hagen, too, I have known from his youthful days, wherefore men can tell me little of this knight. I have seen him fight in two and twenty battles, through which woe of heart hath happened to many a dame. He and the knight from Spain trod many a war path, when here at Etzel's court they waged so many wars in honor of the king. Much this happened, wherefore one must justly honor Hagen. At that time the warrior was of his years a lad. How gray are they who then were young! Now is he come to wit and is a man full grim. Balmung, too, he beareth, the which he won in evil wise."

Therewith the strife was parted, so that no one fought, which mightily rued the queen. The warriors turned them hence; in sooth they feared their death at the fiddler's hands, and surely they had need of this. Then spake the fiddler: "We have now well seen that we shall find foes here, as we heard tell afore. Let us go to court now to the kings, then dare none match our lords in fight. How oft a man doth leave a thing undone through fear, the which he would not do, when friend standeth by friend in friendly wise, an' he have good wits. Scathe to many a man is lightly warded off by forethought."

Quoth Hagen: "Now will I follow you."

They went to where they found the dapper warriors standing in the court in a great press of welcoming knights.

Bold Folker gan speak loudly to his lords: "How long will ye stand and let yourselves be jostled? Ye must go to court and hear from the king of what mind he be."

Men then saw the brave heroes and good pair off. The prince of Berne took by the hand the mighty Gunther of Burgundian land. Irnfried took the brave knight Gernot, while Rudeger was seen to go to court with Giselher. But however any paired, Folker and Hagen never parted, save in one fray, when their end was come, and this noble ladies must needs greatly bewail in after time. With the kings one saw go to court a thousand brave men of their fellowship, thereto sixty champions that were come with them, whom the bold Hagen had taken from his land. Hawart and Iring, two chosen men, were seen to walk together near the kings. Men saw Dankwart and Wolfhart, a peerless knight, display their chivalry before all eyes.

When the lord of the Rhine had entered the hall, the mighty Etzel delayed no longer, but sprang from his throne when he saw him come. Never did so fair a greeting hap from any king. "Be welcome, Sir Gunther, and Sir Gernot, too, and your brother Giselher. I sent you truly my faithful service to Worms beyond the Rhine. All your fellowship, too, I welcome. Now be ye passing welcome, ye two knights, Folker, the brave, and Sir Hagen likewise, to me

and to my lady, here in this our land. She sent you many a messenger to the Rhine."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "I heard much talk of that, and were I not come to the Huns for the sake of my lords, I should have ridden in your honor to this land."

The noble host then took his dear guests by the hand and led them to the settle where he sate himself. Busily they poured out for the guests in broad bowls of gold, mead, morat, and wine and bade those far from home be welcome. Then spake King Etzel: "Let me tell you this; it might not liefer hap to me in all this world, than through you heroes, that ye be come to see me. Through this much sadness is also taken from the queen. Me-wondereth greatly what I have done you noble strangers, that ye never recked to come into my land. My sadness is turned to joy, since now I see you here."

To this Rudeger, a high-mettled knight, made answer: "Ye may be glad to see them. Good is the fealty which the kinsmen of my lady wot how to use so well. They bring also to your house many a stately knight."

Upon a midsummer's eve the lords were come to the court of the mighty Etzel. Seldom hath there been heard such lofty greeting as when he welcomed the heroes. When now the time to eat was come, the king went with them to the board. Never did host sit fairer with his guests. Men gave them meat and drink to the full. All that they craved stood ready for them, for mickle wonders had been told about these knights.

ADVENTURE XXX. How They Kept The Watch.

The day had now an end, and the night drew nigh. Care beset the wayworn travelers, as to when they should go to bed and rest them. This Hagen bespake with Etzel, and it was told them soon.

Gunther spake to the host: "God be with you, we would fain go to our sleep, pray give us leave. We will come early on the morrow, whensoever ye bid."

Etzel parted then full merrily from his guests. Men pressed the strangers on every side, at which brave Folker spake to the Huns: "How dare ye crowd before the warriors' feet? An' ye will not leave this, ye will fare full ill. I'll smite some man so heavy a fiddle blow, that if he have a faithful friend he may well bewail it. Why give ye not way before us knights? Methinks 'twere well. All pass for knights, but be not of equal mettle."

As the fiddler spake thus in wrath, Hagen, the brave, looked behind him. He spake: "The bold gleeman doth advise you right, ye men of Kriemhild, ye should hie you to your lodgings. I ween none of you will do what ye are minded, but would ye begin aught, come early on the morrow, and let us wanderers have peace to-night. Certes, I ween that it hath never happed with such good will on the part of heroes."

Then the guests were brought into a spacious hall, which they found purveyed on every side with costly beds, long and broad, for the warriors. Lady Kriemhild planned the very greatest wrongs against them. One saw there many a cunningly wrought quilt from Arras of shining silken cloth and many a coverlet of Arabian silk, the best that might be had; upon this ran a border that shone in princely wise. Many bed covers of ermine and of black sable were seen, beneath which they should have their ease at night, until the dawn of day. Never hath king lain so lordly with his meiny.

"Alas for these night quarters," spake Giselher, the youth, "and alas for my friends, who be come with us. However kindly my sister greeted us, yet I do fear me that through her fault we must soon lie dead."

"Now give over your care," quoth Hagen, the knight. "I'll stand watch myself to-night. I trow to guard us well, until the day doth come. Therefore have no fear; after that, let him survive who may."

All bowed low and said him gramercy. Then went they to their beds. A short while after the stately men had laid them down, bold Hagen, the hero, began to arm him. Then the fiddler, Knight Folker, spake: "If it scorn you not, Hagen, I would fain hold the watch with you to-night, until the early morn."

The hero then thanked Folker in loving wise: "Now God of heaven requite you, dear Folker. In all my cares, I would crave none other than you alone, whenever I had need. I shall repay you well, and death hinder me not."

Both then donned their shining armor and either took his shield in hand, walked out of the house and stood before the door. Thus they cared for the guests in faithful wise. The doughty Folker leaned his good shield against the side of the hall, then turned him back and fetched his fiddle and served his friends as well befit the hero. Beneath the door of the house he sate him down upon a stone; bolder fiddler was there never. When the tones of the strings rang forth so sweetly, the proud wanderers gave Folker thanks. At first the strings twanged so that the whole house resounded; his strength and his skill were both passing great. Then sweeter and softer he began to play, and thus many a careworn man he lulled to sleep. When he marked that all had fallen asleep, the knight took again his shield and left the room and took his stand before the tower, and there he guarded the wanderers against Kriemhild's men.

'Twas about the middle of the night (I know not but what it happened a little earlier), that bold Folker spied the glint of a helmet afar in the darkness. Kriemhild's men would fain have harmed the guests. Then the fiddler spake: "Sir Hagen, my friend, it behooveth us to bear these cares together. Before the house I see armed men stand, and err I not, I ween, they would encounter us!"

"Be silent," quoth Hagen, "let them draw nearer before they be ware of us. Then will helmets be dislodged by the swords in the hands of us twain. They will be sent back to Kriemhild in evil plight."

One of the Hunnish warriors (full soon that happened) marked that the door was guarded. How quickly then he spake: "That which we have in mind may not now come to pass. I see the fiddler stand on guard. On his head he weareth a glittering helmet, shining and hard, strong and whole. His armor rings flash out like fire. By him standeth Hagen; in sooth the guests be guarded well."

Straightway they turned again. When Folker saw this, wrathfully he spake to his comrade-at-arms: "Now let me go from the house to the warriors. I would fain put some questions to Lady Kriemhild's men."

"For my sake, no," quoth Hagen. "If ye leave the house, the doughty knights are like to bring you in such stress with their swords, that I must aid you even should it be the death of all my kin. As soon as we be come into the fray, twain of them, or four, would in a short time run into the house and would bring such scathe upon the sleepers, that we might never cease to mourn."

Then Folker answered: "Let us bring it to pass that they note that I have seen them, so that Kriemhild's men may not deny that they would fain have acted faithlessly."

Straightway Folker then called out to them: "How go ye thus armed, ye doughty knights? Would ye ride to rob, ye men of Kriemhild? Then must ye have the help of me and my comrade-at-arms."

To this none made reply. Angry grew his mood. "Fy! Ye evil cowards," spake the good knight, "would ye have murdered us asleep? That hath been done full seldom to such good heroes."

Then the queen was told that her messengers had compassed naught. Rightly it did vex her, and with wrathful mood she made another plan. Through this brave heroes and good must needs thereafter perish.

ADVENTURE XXXI. How They Went To Church.

"My coat of mail groweth cold," said Folker. "I ween the night hath run its course. By the air I mark that day is near."

Then they waked the many knights who still lay sleeping. The light of dawn shone into the hall upon the strangers. On all sides Hagen gan wake the warriors, if perchance they would fain go to the minster for mass. Men now loudly rang the bells in Christian fashion. Heathens and Christians did not sing alike, so that it was seen full well that they were not as one. Gunther's liegemen now would go to church, and all alike had risen from their beds. The champions laced them into such goodly garments, that never

did hero bring better clothes to the land of any king. This vexed Hagen. He spake: "Heroes, ye should wear here other clothes. Certes, ye know full well the tales. Instead of roses, bear weapons in your hands; instead of jeweled chaplets, your bright helmets and good, sith ye know full well the wicked Kriemhild's mood. Let me tell you, we must fight to-day, so instead of silken shirts, wear hauberks, and instead of rich cloaks, good shields and broad, so that if any grow angry with you, ye be full armed. Dear my lords, and all my kin and liegemen, go willingly to church and make plaint to the mighty God of your fears and need, for know full sure that death draweth nigh us. Nor must ye forget to confess aught that ye have done and stand full zealously before your God. Of this I warn you, noble knights, unless God in heaven so will, ye'll never more hear mass."

So the princes and their liegemen went to the minster. In the holy churchyard bold Hagen bade them halt, that they might not be parted. He spake: "Of a truth none knoweth what will hap to us from the Huns. Place, my friends, your shields before your feet, and if any proffer you cold greeting, repay it with deep and mortal wounds. That is Hagen's counsel, that ye may so be found as doth befit your honor."

Folker and Hagen, the twain, then hied them to the spacious minster. This was done that the queen might press upon them in the crowd. Certes, she was passing grim. Then came the lord of the land and his fair wife, her body adorned with rich apparel; Doughty warriors, too, were seen to walk beside her. One saw the dust rise high from Kriemhild's band. When mighty Etzel spied the kings and their fellowship thus armed, how quick he spake: "Why do I see my friends thus go with helmets? Upon my troth, it grieveth me, and hath any done them aught, I shall gladly make amends, as doth think them good. Hath any made heavy their hearts or mood, I'll show them well, that it doth irk me much. I am ready for whatever they command me."

To this Hagen answered: "None hath done us aught; it is the custom of my lordings that they go armed at all high feasts for full three days. We should tell Etzel, had aught been done us."

Kriemhild heard full well what Hagen spake. How right hostilely she gazed into his eyes! She would not tell the custom of their land, albeit she had known it long in Burgundy. However grim and strong the hate she bare them, yet had any told Etzel the truth, he would have surely hindered what later happened. Because of their great haughtiness they scorned to tell him. When the great crowd went past with the queen, these twain, Hagen and Folker, would not step back more than two hand-breadths, the which irked the Huns. Forsooth they had to jostle with the lusty heroes. This thought King Etzel's chamberlains not good. Certes, they would have fain angered the champions, but that they durst not before the noble king. So there was much jostling, but nothing more.

When they had worshiped God and would hence again, many a Hunnish warrior horsed him passing soon, At Kriemhild's side stood many a comely maid, and well seven thousand knights rode with the queen. Kriemhild with her ladies sate her down at the easements by the side of the mighty Etzel, which was him lief, for they would watch the lusty heroes joust. Ho, what stranger knights rode before them in the court! Then was come the marshal with the squires. Bold Dankwart had taken to him his lord's retainers from the Burgundian land; the steeds of the Nibelungs they found well saddled. When now the kings and their men were come to horse, stalwart Folker gan advise that they should ride a joust after the fashion of their land. At this the heroes rode in lordly wise; none it irked what the knight had counseled. The hurtling and the noise waxed loud, as the many men rode into the broad court. Etzel and Kriemhild themselves beheld the scene. To the jousts were come six hundred knights of Dietrich's men to match the strangers, for they would have pastime with the Burgundians. Fain would they have done it, had he given them leave. Ho, what good champions rode in their train! The tale was told to Sir Dietrich and he forbade the game with Gunther's men; he feared for his liegemen, and well he might.

When those of Berne had departed thence, there came the men of Rudeger from Bechelaren, five hundred strong, with shields, riding out before the hall. It would have been lief to the margrave,

had they left it undone. Wisely he rode then to them through the press and said to his knights, that they were ware that Gunther's men were evil-minded toward them. If they would leave off the jousting, it would please him much. When now these lusty heroes parted from them, then came those of Thuringia, as we are told, and well a thousand brave men from Denmark. From the tilting one saw many truncheons flying hence. Infried and Hawart now rode into the tourney. Proudly those from the Rhine awaited them and offered the men of Thuringia many a joust. Many a lordly shield was riddled by the thrusts. Thither came then Sir Bloedel with three thousand men. Well was he seen of Etzel and Kriemhild, for the knightly sports happed just before the twain. The queen saw it gladly, that the Burgundians might come to grief. Schrutan and Gibecke, Ramung and Hornbog, rode into the tourney in Hunnish wise. To the heroes from Burgundian land they addressed them. High above the roof of the royal hall the spear-shafts whirled. Whatever any there plied, 'twas but a friendly rout. Palace and hall were heard resounding loud through the clashing of the shields of Gunther's men. With great honor his meiny gained the meed. Their pastime was so mickle and so great, that from beneath the housings of the good steeds, which the heroes rode, there flowed the frothy sweat. In haughty wise they encountered with the Huns.

Then spake the fiddler, Folker the minstrel: "I ween these warriors dare not match us. I've aye heard the tale, that they bear us hate, and forsooth it might never fortune better for them than now." Again Folker spake: "Let our steeds be now led away to their lodgings and let us joust again toward eventide, and there be time. Perchance the queen may accord to the Burgundians the prize."

Then one was seen riding hither so proudly, that none of all the Huns could have done the like. Certes, he must have had a sweetheart on the battlements. As well attired he rode as the bride of any noble knight. At sight of him Folker spake again: "How could I give this over? This ladies' darling must have a buffet. None shall prevent me and it shall cost him dear. In truth I reck not, if it vex King Etzel's wife."

"For my sake, No," spake straightway King Gunther. "The people will blame us, if we encounter them. 'Twill befit us better far, an' we let the Huns begin the strife."

King Etzel was still sitting by the queen.

"I'll join you in the tourney," quoth Hagen then. "Let the ladies and the knights behold how we can ride. That will be well, for they'll give no need to King Gunther's men."

The doughty Folker rode into the lists again, which soon gave many a dame great dole. His spear he thrust through the body of the dapper Hun; this both maid and wife were seen thereafter to bewail. Full hard and fast gan Hagen and his liegemen and sixty of his knights ride towards the fiddler, where the play was on. This Etzel and Kriemhild clearly saw. The three kings would not leave their minstrel without guard amidst the foe. Cunningly a thousand heroes rode; with haughty bearing they did whatso they would. When now the wealthy Hun was slain, men heard his kin cry out and wail. All the courtiers asked: "Who hath done this deed?"

"That the fiddler did, Folker, the valiant minstrel."

The margrave's kindred from the Hunnish land called straightway for their swords and shields, and would fain have done Folker to death. Fast the host gan hasten from the windows. Great rout arose from the folk on every side. The kings and their fellowship, the Burgundian men, alighted before the hall and drove their horses to the rear. Then King Etzel came to part the strife. From the hand of a kinsman of the Hun he wrenched a sturdy weapon and drove them all back again, for full great was his wrath. "Why should my courtesie to these knights go all for naught? Had ye slain this minstrel at my court," spake King Etzel, "twere evil done. I saw full well how he rode, when he thrust through the Hun, that it happed through stumbling, without any fault of his. Ye must let my guests have peace."

Thus he became their safe-guard. To the stalls men led away the steeds; many a varlet they had, who served them well with zeal in every service. The host now hied him to his palace with his friends, nor would he let any man grow wroth again. Then men set up the tables and bare forth water for the guests. Forsooth the

men from the Rhine had there enow of stalwart foes. 'Twas long before the lords were seated.

Meanwhile Kriemhild's fears did trouble her passing sore. She spake: "My lord of Berne, I seek thy counsel, help, and favor, for mine affairs do stand in anxious wise."

Then Hildebrand, a worshipful knight, made answer to her: "And any slay the Nibelungs for the sake of any hoard, he will do it without my aid. It may well repent him, for they be still unconquered, these doughty and lusty knights."

Then Spake Sir Dietrich in his courteous wise: "Let be this wish, O mighty queen. Thy kinsmen have done me naught of wrong, that I should crave to match these valiant knights in strife. Thy request honoreth thee little, most noble queen, that thou dost plot against the life of thy kinsfolk. They came in hope of friendship to this land. Siegfried will not be avenged by Dietrich's hand."

When she found no whit of faithlessness in the lord of Berne, quickly she promised Bloedel a broad estate, that Nudung owned aforetime. Later he was slain by Hagen, so that he quite forgot the gift. She spake: "Thou must help me, Sir Bloedel, forsooth my foes be in this house, who slew Siegfried, my dear husband. Ever will I serve him, that helpeth me avenge this deed."

To this Bloedel replied: "My lady, now may ye know that because of Etzel I dare not, in sooth, advise to hatred against them, for he is fain to see thy kinsmen at his court. The king would ne'er forget it of me, and I did them aught of wrong."

"Not so, Sir Bloedel, for I shall ever be thy friend. Certes, I'll give thee silver and gold as guerdon and a comely maid, the wife of Nudung, whose lovely body thou mayst fain caress. I'll give thee his land and all his castles, too, so that thou mayst always live in joy, Sir knight, if thou dost now win the lands where Nudung dwelt. Faithfully will I keep, whatso I vow to thee to-day."

When Sir Bloedel heard the guerdon, and that the lady through her beauty would befit him well, he weened to serve the lovely queen in strife. Because of this the champion must needs lose his life. To the queen he spake: "Betake you again to the hall, and before any be aware, I'll begin a fray and Hagen must atone for what he hath done you. I'll deliver to you King Gunther's liegeman bound. Now arm you, my men," spake Bloedel. "We must hasten to the lodgings of the foes, for King Etzel's wife doth crave of me this service, wherefore we heroes must risk our lives."

When the queen left Bloedel in lust of battle, she went to table with King Etzel and his men. Evil counsels had she held against the guests. Since the strife could be started in no other wise (Kriemhild's ancient wrong still lay deep buried in her heart), she bade King Etzel's son be brought to table. How might a woman ever do more ghastly deed for vengeance' sake? Four of Etzel's men went hence anon and bare Ortlieb, the young prince, to the lordings' table, where Hagen also sat. Because of this the child must needs die through Hagen's mortal hate.

When now the mighty king beheld his son, kindly he spake to the kinsmen of his wife: "Now see, my friends, this is the only son of me and of your sister. This may be of profit to you all, for if he take after his kinsmen, he'll become a valiant man, mighty and noble, strong and fashioned fair. Twelve lands will I give him, and I live yet a while. Thus may the hand of young Ortlieb serve you well. I do therefore beseech you, dear friends of mine, that when ye ride again to your lands upon the Rhine, ye take with you your sister's son and act full graciously toward the child, and bring him up in honor till he become a man. Hath any done you aught in all these lands, he'll help you to avenge it, when he groweth up."

This speech was also heard by Kriemhild, King Etzel's wife.

"These knights might well trust him," quoth Hagen, "if he grew to be a man, but the young prince doth seem so fey, that I shall seldom be seen to ride to Ortlieb's court."

The king glanced at Hagen, for much the speech did irk him; and though the gentle prince said not a word, it grieved his heart and made him heavy of his mood. Nor was Hagen's mind now bent on pastime. But all the lordings and the king were hurt by what Hagen had spoken of the child; it vexed them sore, that they were forced to hear it. They wot not the things as yet, which should happen to them through this warrior.

ADVENTURE XXXII How Bloedel Was Slain.

Full ready were now Bloedel's warriors. A thousand hauberks strong, they hied them to where Dankwart sate at table with the squires. Then the very greatest hate arose among the heroes. When Sir Bloedel drew near the tables, Dankwart, the marshal, greeted him in courteous wise. "Welcome, Sir Bloedel, in our house. In truth me wondereth at thy coming. What doth it mean?"

"Forsooth, thou needst not greet me," so spake Bloedel; "for this coming of mine doth mean thine end. Because of Hagen, thy brother, by whom Siegfried was slain, thou and many other knights must suffer here among the Huns."

"Not so, Sir Bloedel," quoth Dankwart, "else this journey to your court might rue us sore. I was but a little child when Siegfried lost his life. I know not what blame King Etzel's wife could put on me."

"Of a truth, I wot not how to tell you of these tales; thy kinsmen, Gunther and Hagen, did the deed. Now ward you, ye wanderers, ye may not live. With your death must ye become Kriemhild's pledge."

"And ye will not turn you," quoth Dankwart, "then do my entreaties rue me; they had better far been spared."

The doughty knight and brave sprang up from the table; a sharp weapon, mickle and long, he drew and dealt Bloedel so fierce a sword-stroke that his head lay straightway at his feet. "Let that be thy marriage morning gift," spake Dankwart, the knight, "for Nudung's bride, whom thou wouldst cherish with thy love. They call betroth her to another man upon the morn. Should he crave the dowry, 'twill be given to him eftsoon." A faithful Hun had told him that the queen did plan against them such grievous wrongs.

When Bloedel's men beheld their lord lie slain, no longer would they stand this from the guests. With uplifted swords they rushed, grim of mood, upon the youthful squires. Many a one did rue this later. Loudly Dankwart called to all the fellowship: "Ye see well, noble squires, how matters stand. Now ward you, wanderers! Forsooth we have great need, though Kriemhild asked us here in right friendly wise."

Those that had no sword reached down in front of the benches and lifted many a long footstool by its legs. The Burgundian squires would now abide no longer, but with the heavy stools they dealt many bruises through the helmets. How fiercely the stranger youths did ward them! Out of the house they drove at last the men-at-arms, but five hundred of them, or better, stayed behind there dead. The fellowship was red and wot with blood.

These grievous tales were told now to Etzel's knights; grim was their sorrow, that Bloedel and his men were slain. This Hagen's brother and his squires had done. Before the king had learned it, full two thousand Huns or more armed them through hatred and hied them to the squires (this must needs be), and of the fellowship they left not one alive. The faithless Huns brought a mickle band before the house. Well the strangers stood their ground, but what bootied their doughty prowess? Dead they all must lie. Then in a few short hours there rose a fearful dole. Now ye may hear wonders of a monstrous thing. Nine thousand yeomen lay there slain and thereto twelve good knights of Dankwart's men. One saw him stand alone still by the foe. The noise was hushed, the din had died away, when Dankwart, the hero, gazed over his shoulders. He spake: "Woe is me, for the friends whom I have lost! Now must I stand, alas, alone among my foes."

Upon his single person the sword-strokes fell thick and fast. The wife of many a hero must later mourn for this. Higher he raised his shield, the thong he lowered; the rings of many an armor he made to drip with blood. "Woe is me of all this sorrow," quoth Aldrian's son. "Give way now, Hunnish warriors, and let me out into the breeze, that the air may cool me, fight-weary man."

Then men saw the warrior walk forth in full lordly wise. As the strife-weary man sprang from the house, how many added swords rang on his helmet! Those that had not seen what wonders his hand had wrought sprang towards the hero of the Burgundian land. "Now would to God," quoth Dankwart, "that I might find a messenger who could let my brother Hagen know I stand in such a plight before these knights. He would help me hence, or lie dead at my side."

Then spake the Hunnish champions: "Thou must be the messenger thyself, when we bear thee hence dead before thy brother. For the first time Gunther's vassal will then become acquainted with grief. Passing great scathe hast thou done King Etzel here."

Quoth he: "Now give over these threats and stand further back, or I'll wot the armor rings of some with blood. I'll tell the tale at court myself and make plaint to my lords of my great dole."

So sorely he dismayed King Etzel's men that they durst not withstand him with their swords, so they shot such great store of darts into his shield that he must needs lay it from his hand for very heaviness. Then they weened to overpower him, sith he no longer bare a shield. Ho, what deep wounds he struck them through their helmets! From this many a brave man was forced to reel before him, and bold Dankwart gained thereby great praise. From either side they sprang upon him, but in truth a many of them entered the fray too soon. Before his foes he walked, as doth a boar to the woods before the dogs. How might he be more brave? His path was ever wot with reeking blood. Certes, no single champion might ever fight better with his foes than he had done. Men now saw Hagen's brother go to court in lordly wise. Sewers and cupbearers heard the ring of swords, and full many a one cast from his hand the drink and whatever food he bare to court. Enow strong foes met Dankwart at the stairs.

"How now, ye sewers," spake the weary knight. "Forsooth ye should serve well the guests and bear to the lords good cheer and let me bring the tidings to my dear masters."

Those that sprang towards him on the steps to show their prowess, he dealt so heavy a sword-stroke, that for fear they must needs stand further back. His mighty strength wrought mickle wonders.

ADVENTURE XXXIII. How The Burgundians Fought The Huns.

When brave Dankwart was come within the door, he bade King Etzel's meiny step aside. His garments dripped with blood and in his hand he bare unsheathed a mighty sword. Full loud he called out to the knight: "Brother Hagen, ye sit all too long, forsooth. To you and to God in heaven do I make plaint of our woe. Our knights and squires all lie dead within their lodgements."

He called in answer: "Who hath done this deed?"

"That Sir Bloedel hath done with his liegemen, but he hath paid for it dearly, as I can tell you, for with mine own hands I struck off his head."

"It is but little scathe," quoth Hagen, "if one can only say of a knight that he hath lost his life at a warrior's hands. Stately dames shall mourn him all the less. Now tell me, brother Dankwart, how comes it that ye be so red of hue? Ye suffer from wounds great dole, I ween. If there be any in the land that hath done you this, 'twill cost his life, and the foul fiend save him not."

"Ye see me safe and sound; my weeds alone are wot with blood. This hath happened from wounds of other men, of whom I have slain so many a one to-day that, had I to swear it, I could not tell the tale."

"Brother Dankwart," he spake, "guard us the door and let not a single Hun go forth. I will hold speech with the warriors, as our need constraineth us, for our meiny lieth dead before them, undeserved."

"If I must be chamberlain," quoth the valiant man, "I well wot how to serve such mighty kings and will guard the stairway, as doth become mine honors." Naught could have been more loth to Kriemhild's knights.

"Much it wondereth me," spake Hagen, "what the Hunnish knights be whispering in here. I ween, they'd gladly do without the one that standeth at the door, and who told the courtly tale to us Burgundians. Long since I have heard it said of Kriemhild, that she would not leave unavenged her dole of heart. Now let us drink to friendship and pay for the royal wine. The young lord of the Huns shall be the first."

Then the good knight Hagen smote the child Ortlieb, so that the blood spurted up the sword towards his hand and the head fell into the lap of the queen. At this there began a murdering, grim and great, among the knights. Next he dealt the master who

taught the child a fierce sword-stroke with both his hands, so that his head fell quickly beneath the table to the ground. A piteous meed it was, which he meted out to the master. Hagen then spied a gleeman sitting at King Etzel's board. In his wrath he hid him thither and struck off his right hand upon the fiddle. "Take this as message to the Burgundian land."

"Woe is me of my hand," spake the minstrel Werbel. "Sir Hagen of Troneg, what had I done to you? I came in good faith to your masters' land. How can I now thrum the tunes, sith I have lost my hand?"

Little recked Hagen, played he nevermore. In the hall he dealt out fierce deadly wounds to Etzel's warriors, passing many of whom he slew. Enow of folk in the house he did to death. The doughty Folker now sprang up from the board; loud rang in his hands his fiddle bow. Rudely did Gunther's minstrel play. Ho, what foes he made him among the valiant Huns! The three noble kings, too, sprang up from the table. Gladly would they have parted the fray, or ever greater scathe was done. With all their wit they could not hinder it, when Folker and Hagen gan rage so sore. When that the lord of the Rhine beheld the fray unparted, the prince dealt his foes many gaping wounds himself through the shining armor rings. That he was a hero of his hands, he gave great proof. Then the sturdy Gernot joined the strife. Certes, he did many a hero of the Huns to death with a sharp sword, the which Rudeger had given him. Mighty wounds he dealt King Etzel's warriors. Now the young son of Lady Uta rushed to the fray. Gloriously his sword rang on the helmets of Etzel's warriors from the Hunnish land. Full mickle wonders were wrought by bold Giselher's hand. But how so doughty they all were, the kings and their liegemen, yet Folker was seen to stand before them all against the foe; a good hero he. Many a one he made to fall in his blood through wounds. Etzel's men did fend them, too, full well, yet one saw the strangers go hewing with their gleaming swords through the royal hall and on every side was heard great sound of wail. Those without would now fain be with their friends within, but at the entrance towers they found small gain. Those within had gladly been without the hall, but Dankwart let none go either up or down the steps. Therefore there rose before the towers a mighty press, and helmets rang loudly from the sword-blows. Bold Dankwart came into great stress thereby; this his brother feared, as his loyalty did bid him.

Loudly then Hagen called to Folker: "See ye yonder, comrade, my brother stand before the Hunnish warriors amid a rain of blows? Friend, save my brother, or ever we lose the knight."

"That will I surely," quoth the minstrel, and through the palace he went a-fiddling, his stout sword ringing often in his hand. Great thanks were tendered by the warriors from the Rhine. Bold Folker spake to Dankwart: "Great discomfiture have ye suffered to-day, therefore your brother bade me hasten to your aid. Will ye stand without, so will I stand within."

Sturdy Dankwart stood without the door and guarded the staircase against whoever came, wherefore men heard the swords resound in the heroes' hands. Folker of Burgundy land performed the same within. Across the press the bold fiddler cried: "Friend Hagen, the hall is locked; forsooth King Etzel's door is bolted well. The hands of two heroes guard it, as with a thousand bars." When Hagen of Troneg beheld the door so well defended, the famous hero and good slung his shield upon his back and gan avenge the wrongs that had been done him there. His foes had now no sort of hope to live.

When now the lord of Berne, the king of the Amelungs, beheld aright that the mighty Hagen broke so many a helm, upon a bench he sprang and spake: "Hagen poureth out the very worst of drinks."

The host, too, was sore adread, as behooved him now, for his life was hardly safe from these his foes. O how many dear friends were snatched away before his eyes! He sate full anxious; what booted it him that he was king? Haughty Kriemhild now cried aloud to Dietrich: "Pray help me hence alive, most noble knight, by the virtues of all the princes of the Amelung land. If Hagen reach me, I shall grasp death by the hand."

"How shall I help you, noble queen?" spake Sir Dietrich. "I fear for myself in sooth. These men of Gunther be so passing wroth

that at this hour I cannot guard a soul."

"Nay, not so, Sir Dietrich, noble knight and good. Let thy chivalrous mood appear to-day and help me hence, or I shall die." Passing great cause had Kriemhild for this fear.

"I'll try to see if I may help you, for it is long since that I have soon so many good knights so bitterly enraged. Of a truth I see blood spurting through the helmets from the swords."

Loudly the chosen knight gan call, so that his voice rang forth as from a bison's horn, until the broad castle resounded with his force. Sir Dietrich's strength was passing great in truth.

When Gunther heard this man cry out in the heated strife, he began to heed. He spake: "Dietrich's voice hath reached mine ears, I ween our champions have bereft him of some friend to-day. I see him on the table, he doth beckon with his hand. Ye friends and kinsmen from Burgundian land, give over the strife. Let's hear and see what here hath fortune to the knight from my men-at-arms."

When Gunther thus begged and bade in the stress of the fray, they sheathed their swords. Passing great was his power, so that none struck a blow. Soon enow he asked the tidings of the knight of Berne. He spake: "Most noble Dietrich, what hath happened to you through these my friends? I am minded to do you remedy and to make amends. If any had done you aught, 'twould grieve me sore."

Then spake Sir Dietrich: "Naught hath happened to me, but I pray you, let me leave this hall and this fierce strife under your safeguard, with my men. For this favor I will serve you ever."

"How entreat ye now so soon," quoth Wolfhart then. "Forsooth the fiddler hath not barred the door so strong, but what we may open it enow to let us pass."

"Hold your tongue," spake Sir Dietrich; "the devil a whit have ye ever done."

Then: spake King Gunther: "I will grant your boon. Lead from the hall as few or as many as ye will, save my foes alone; they must remain within. Right ill have they treated me in the Hunnish land."

When Dietrich heard these words, he placed his arm around the high-born queen, whose fear was passing great. On his other side he led King Etzel with him hence; with Dietrich there also went six hundred stately men.

Then spake the noble Margrave Rudeger: "Shall any other who would gladly serve you come from this hall, let us hear the tale, and lasting peace shall well befit good friends."

To this Giselher of the Burgundian land replied: "Peace and friendship be granted you by us, sith ye are constant in your fealty. Ye and all your men, ye may go hence fearlessly with these your friends."

When Sir Rudeger voided the hall, there followed him, all told, five hundred men or more, kinsmen and vassals of the lord of Bechelaren, from whom King Gunther later gained great scathe. Then a Hunnish champion spied Etzel walking close by Dietrich. He, too, would take this chance, but the fiddler dealt him such a blow that his head fell soon before King Etzel's feet. When the lord of the land was come outside the house, he turned him about and gazed on Folker. "Woe is me of these guests. This is a direful need, that all my warriors should lie low in death before them. Alas for the feasting," quoth the noble king. "Like a savage boar there fighteth one within, hight Folker, who is a gleeman. I thank my stars that I escaped this fiend. His glees have an evil sound, the strokes of his how draw blood; forsooth his measures fell many a hero dead. I wot not, with what this minstrel twitteth us, for I have never had such baleful guest."

They had permitted whom they would to leave the hall. Then there arose within a mighty uproar; sorely the guests avenged what there had happened them. Ho, what helmets bold Folker broke! The noble King Gunther turned him toward the sound. "Hear ye the measures, Hagen, which Folker yonder fiddleth with the Huns, when any draweth near the towers? 'Tis a blood-red stroke he useth with the bow."

"It rueth me beyond all measure," quoth Hagen, "that in this hall I sate me down to rest before the hero did. I was his comrade and he was mine; and come we ever home again, we shall still be so, in loyal wise. Now behold, most noble king, Folker is thy friend, he earneth gladly thy silver and thy gold. His fiddle bow

doth cut through the hardest steel, on the helmets he breaketh the bright and shining gauds! Never have I seen fiddler stand in such lordly wise as the good knight Folker hath stood to-day. His glees resound through shield and helmet. Certes he shall ride good steeds and wear lordly raiment."

Of all the kinsmen of the Huns within the hall, not one of these remained alive. Thus the clash of arms died out, since none strove with them longer. The lusty knights and bold now laid aside their swords.

ADVENTURE XXXIV. How They Cast Out The Dead.

The lordings sate them down for weariness. Folker and Hagen came forth from the hall; upon their shields the haughty warriors leaned. Wise words were spoken by the twain. Then Knight Giseler of Burgundy spake: "Forsooth, dear friends, ye may not ease you yet; ye must bear the dead from out the hall. I'll tell you, of a truth, we shall be attacked again. They must no longer lie here beneath our feet. Ere the Huns vanquish us by storm, we'll yet how wounds, which shall ease my heart. For this," quoth Giseler, "I have a steadfast mind."

"Well is me of such a lord," spake then Hagen. "This rede which my young master hath given us to-day would befit no one but a knight. At this, Burgundians, ye may all stand glad."

Then they followed the rede, and to the door they bare seven thousand dead, the which they cast outside. Down they fell before the stairway to the hall, and from their kinsmen rose a full piteous wall. Some there were with such slight wounds that, had they been more gently treated, they would have waxed well again; but from the lofty fall, they must needs lie dead. Their friends bewailed this, and forsooth they had good cause.

Then spake Folker, the fiddler, a lusty knight: "Now I mark the truth of this, as hath been told me. The Huns be cravens, like women they wail; they should rather nurse these sorely wounded men."

A margrave weened, he spake through kindness. Seeing one of his kinsmen lying in the blood, he clasped him in his arms and would have borne him hence, when the bold minstrel shot him above the dead to death. The flight began as the others saw this deed, and all fell to cursing this selfsame minstrel. He snatched javelin, sharp and hard, the which had been hurled at him by a Hun, and cast it with might across the court, far over the folk. Thus he forced Etzel's warriors to take lodgement further from the hall. On every side the people feared his mighty prowess.

Many thousand men now stood before the hall. Folker and Hagen gan speak to Etzel all their mind, wherefrom these heroes bold and good came thereafter into danger. Quoth Hagen: "Twould well beseem the people's hope, if the lords would fight in the foremost ranks, as doth each of my lordings here. They hew through the helmets, so that the blood doth follow the sword."

Etzel was brave; he seized his shield. "Now fare warily," spake Lady Kriemhild, "and offer the warriors gold upon your shield. If Hagen doth but reach you there, ye'll be hand in hand with death."

The king was so bold he would not turn him back, the which doth now seldom hap from so mighty a lord. By his shield-thong they had to draw him hence. Once again grim Hagen began to mock him. "It is a distant kinship," quoth Hagen, the knight, "that bindeth Etzel and Siegfried. He loved Kriemhild, or ever she laid eyes on thee. Most evil king, why dost thou plot against me?"

Kriemhild, the wife of the noble king, heard this speech; angry she grew that he durst thus revile her before King Etzel's liegemen. Therefore she again began to plot against the strangers. She spake: "For him that slayeth me Hagen of Troneg and bringeth me his head, I will fill King Etzel's shield with ruddy gold, thereto will I give him as guerdon many goodly lands and castles."

"Now I know not for what they wait," spake the minstrel. "Never have I seen heroes stand so much like cowards, when one heard proffered such goodly wage. Forsooth King Etzel should never be their friend again. Many of those who so basely eat the lording's bread, and now desert him in the greatest need, do I see stand here as cravens, and yet would pass for brave. May shame ever be their lot!"

ADVENTURE XXXV. How Iring Was Slain.

Then cried Margrave Iring of Denmark: "I have striven for honor now long time, and in the storm of battle have been among the best. Now bring me my harness, for in sooth I will encounter me with Hagen."

"I would not counsel that," spake Hagen, "but bid the Hunnish knights stand further back. If twain of you or three leap into the hall, I'll send them back sore wounded down the steps."

"Not for that will I give it over," quoth Iring again. "I've tried before such daring things; in truth with my good sword I will encounter thee alone. What availeth all thy boasting, which thou hast done in words?"

Then were soon arrayed the good Knight Iring and Imfried of Thuringia, a daring youth, and the stalwart Hawart and full a thousand men. Whatever Iring ventured, they would all fain give him aid. Then the fiddler spied a mighty troop, that strode along well armed with Iring. Upon their heads they bare good helmets. At this bold Folker waxed a deal full wroth of mood. "See ye, friend Hagen, Iring striding yonder, who vowed to match you with his sword alone? How doth lying beseem a hero? Much that misliketh me. There walk with him full a thousand knights or more, well armed."

"Say not that I lie," spake Hawart's liegeman. "Gladly will I perform what I have vowed, nor will I desist therefrom through any fear. However frightful Hagen be, I will meet him single-handed."

On his knees Iring begged both kinsmen and vassals to let him match the knight alone. This they did unwillingly, for well they knew the haughty Hagen from the Burgundian land. But Iring begged so long that at last it happened. When the fellowship beheld his wish and that he strove for honor, they let him go. Then a fierce conflict rose between the twain. Iring of Denmark, the peerless high-born knight, bare high his spear and covered him with his shield. Swiftly he rushed on Hagen before the hall, while a great shout arose from all the knights around. With might and main they cast the spears with their hands through the sturdy shields upon their shining armor, so that the shafts whirled high in air. Then the two brave men and fierce reached for their swords. Bold Hagen's strength was mickle and great, but Iring smote him, that the whole hall rang. Palace and towers resounded from their blows, but the knight could not achieve his wish.

Iring now left Hagen stand unharmed, and hied him to the fiddler. He weened to fell him by his mighty blows, but the stately knight wist how to guard him, well. Then the fiddler struck a blow, that the plates of mail whirled high above the buckler's rim. An evil man he was, for to encounter, so Iring let him stand and rushed at Gunther of the Burgundian land. Here, too, either was strong enow in strife. The blows that Gunther and Iring dealt each other drew no blood from wounds. This the harness hindered, the which was both strong and good.

He now let Gunther be, and ran at Gernot, and gan hew sparks of fire from his armor rings. Then had stalwart Gernot of Burgundy nigh done brave Iring unto death, but that he sprang away from the prince (nimble enow he was), and slew eftsoon four noble henchmen of the Burgundians from Worms across the Rhine. At this Giseler might never have waxed more wroth. "God wot, Sir Iring," spake Giseler, the youth, "ye must pay me weregild for those who have fallen dead this hour before you."

Then at him he rushed and smote the Dane, so that he could not stir a step, but sank before his hands down in the blood, so that all did ween the good knight would never deal a blow again in strife. But Iring lay unwounded here before Sir Giseler. From the crashing of the helmet and the ringing of the sword, his wits had grown so weak that the brave knight no longer thought of life. Stalwart Giseler had done this with his might. When now the ringing gan leave his head, the which he had suffered from the mighty stroke, he thought: "I am still alive and nowhere wounded. Now first wot I of Giseler's mighty strength." On either side he heard his foes. Wist they the tale, still more had happened him. Giseler, too, he marked hard by; he bethought him, how he might escape his foes. How madly he sprang up from the blood! Well might he thank his nimbleness for this. Out of the house he ran to where he again

found Hagen, whom he dealt a furious blow with his powerful hand.

Hagen thought him: "Thou art doomed. Unless be that the foul fiend protect thee, thou canst not escape alive."

Yet Iring wounded Hagen through his crest. This the hero wrought with Waska, a passing goodly sword. When Sir Hagen felt the wound, wildly he brandished his weapon in his hand. Soon Hawart's liegeman was forced to yield his ground, and Hagen gan pursue him down the stairs. Brave Iring swung his shield above his head, but had the staircase been the length of three, Hagen would not have let him strike a blow the while. Ho, what red sparks did play above his helmet!

Iring returned scatheless to his liegemen. Then the tidings were brought to Kriemhild, of that which he had wrought in strife with Hagen of Troneg. For this the queen gan thank him highly. "Now God requite thee, Iring, thou peerless hero and good. Thou hast comforted well my heart and mind. I see that Hagen's weeds be wot with blood." For very joy Kriemhild herself relieved him of his shield.

"Be not too lavish of your thanks," spake Hagen. "Twould well befit a knight to try again. A valiant man were he, if he then came back alive. Little shall the wound profit you, which I have at his bands; for that ye have seen the rings wot with blood from my wound doth urge me to the death of many a man. Now first am I enraged at Hawart's liegeman. Small scathe hath Knight Iring done me yet."

Meanwhile Iring of Denmark stood in the breeze; he cooled his harness and doffed his casque. All the folk then praised his prowess, at which the margrave was in passing lofty mood. Again Sir Iring spake: "My friends, this know; arm me now quickly, for I would fain try again, if perchance I may not conquer this overweening man."

His shield was hewn to pieces, a better one he gained; full soon the champion was armed again. Through hate he seized a passing heavy spear with which he would encounter Hagen yonder. Meantime the death-grim man awaited him in hostile wise. But Knight Hagen would not abide his coming. Hurling the javelin and brandishing his sword, he ran to meet him to the very bottom of the stairs. Forsooth his rage was great. Little bootied Iring then his strength; through the shields they smote, so that the flames rose high in fiery blasts. Hagen sorely wounded Hawart's liegeman with his sword through shield and breastplate. Never waxed he well again. When now Knight Iring felt the wound, higher above his helmet bands he raised his shield. Great enow he thought the scathe he here received, but thereafter King Gunther's liegeman did him more of harm. Hagen found a spear lying now before his feet. With this he shot Iring, the Danish hero, so that the shaft stood forth from his head. Champion Hagen had given him a bitter end. Iring must needs retreat to those of Denmark. Or ever they unboun his helmet and drew the spear-shaft from his head, death had already drawn nigh him. At this his kinsmen wept, as forsooth they had great need.

Then the queen came and bent above him. She gan bewail the stalwart Iring and bewept his wounds, indeed her grief was passing sharp. At this the bold and lusty warrior spake before his kinsmen: "Let be this wail, most royal queen. What availeth your weeping now? Certes, I must lose my life from these wounds I have received. Death will no longer let me serve you and Etzel." To the men of Thuringia and to those of Denmark he spake: "None of you must take from the queen her shining ruddy gold as meed, for if ye encounter Hagen, ye must gaze on death."

Pale grew his hue; brave Iring bare the mark of death. Dole enow it gave them, for no longer might Hawart's liegeman live. Then the men of Denmark must needs renew the fray. Irnfried and Hawart with well a thousand champions leaped toward the hall. On every side one heard a monstrous uproar, mighty and strong. Ho, what sturdy javelins were cast at the Burgundian men! Bold Irnfried rushed at the minstrel, but gained great damage at his hands. Through his sturdy helmet the noble fiddler smote the landgrave. Certes, he was grim enow! Then Sir Irnfried dealt the valiant gleeman such a blow that his coat of mail burst open and his breastplate was enveloped with a bright red flame. Yet the landgrave fell dead at the minstrel's hands. Hawart and Hagen,

too, had come together. Wonders would he have seen, who beheld the fight. The swords fell thick and fast in the heroes' hands. Through the knight from the Burgundian land Hawart needs must die. When the Thuringians and the Danes espied their lordings dead, there rose before the hall a fearful strife, before they gained the door with mighty hand. Many a helm and shield was hacked and cut thereby.

"Give way," spake Folker, "and let them in, for else what they have in mind will not be ended. They must die in here in full short time. With death they'll gain what the queen would give them."

When these overweening men were come into the hall, the head of many a one sank down so low that he needs must die from their furious strokes. Well fought the valiant Gernot, and the same did Giseler, the knight. A thousand and four were come into the hall and many a whizzing stroke of the swords was seen flash forth, but soon all the warriors lay slain therein. Mickle wonders might one tell of the Burgundian men. The hall grew still, as the uproar died away. On every side the dead men's blood poured through the openings down to the drain-pipes. This the men from the Rhine had wrought with their passing strength.

Those from the Burgundian land now sate them down to rest and laid aside their swords and shields. But still the valiant minstrel stood guard before the hall. He waited, if any would perchance draw near again in strife. Sorely the king made wail, as did the queen. Maids and ladies were distraught with grief. Death, I ween, had conspired against them, wherefore many of the warriors perished through the guests.

ADVENTURE XXXVI. How The Queen Gave Orders To Burn the Hall.

"Now unbind your helmets," spake the good Knight Hagen. "I and my comrade will guard you well, and should Etzel's men be minded to try again, I'll warn my lords as soon as I ever can."

Then many a good knight bared his head. They sate them down upon the wounded, who had fallen in the blood, done to death at their hands. Evil looks were cast upon the noble strangers. Before the eventide the king and the queen brought it to pass that the Hunnish champions tried again. Men saw full twenty thousand warriors stand before them, who must perforce march to the fray. Straightway there rose a mighty storming towards the strangers. Dankwart, Hagen's brother, the doughty knight, sprang from his lordings' side to meet the foes without the door. All weened that he were dead, yet forth he stood again unscathed. The furious strife did last till nightfall brought it to a close. As befitted good knights, the strangers ward off King Etzel's liegemen the live-long summer day. Ho, how many a bold knight fell doomed before them! This great slaughter happed upon midsummer's day, when Lady Kriemhild avenged her sorrow of heart upon her nearest kin and upon many another man, so that King Etzel never again gained joy.

The day had passed away, but still they had good cause for fear. They thought, a short and speedy death were better for them, than to be longer racked with monstrous pain. A truce these proud and lusty knights now craved; they begged that men would bring the king to see them. Forth from the hall stepped the heroes, bloody of hue, and the three noble kings, stained from their armor. They wist not to whom they should make plaint of their mighty wounds. Thither both Etzel and Kriemhild went; the land was theirs and so their band waxed large. He spake to the strangers: "Pray tell me, what ye will of me? Ye ween to gain here peace, but that may hardly be. For damage as great as ye have done me, in my son and in my many kinsmen, whom ye have slain, peace and pardon shall be denied you quite; it shall not boot you aught, an' I remain alive."

To this King Gunther answered: "Dire need constrained us; all my men-at-arms lay dead before thy heroes in the hostel. How did I deserve such pay? I came to thee in trust, I weened thou wast my friend."

Young Giseler of Burgundy likewise spake: "Ye men of Etzel, who still do live, what do ye blame me with? What have I done to you, for I rode in friendly wise into this land of yours."

Quoth they: "From thy friendliness this castle is filled with grief and the land as well. We should not have taken it ill, in sooth, if thou hadst never come from Worms beyond the Rhine. Thou and thy brothers have filled this land with orphans."

Then spake Knight Giselher in angry mood: "And ye will lay aside this bitter hate and make your peace with us stranger knights, 'twere best for either side. We have not merited at all what Etzel here doth do us."

Then spake the host to his guests: "Unlike are my wrongs and yours. The mickle grievance from the loss and then the shame, which I have taken here, are such that none of you shall e'er go hence alive."

At this mighty Gernot spake to the king: "May God then bid you act in merciful wise. Slay, if ye will, us homeless knights, but let us first descend to you into the open court. That will make to you for honor. Let be done quickly whatever shall hap to us. Ye have still many men unscathed, who dare well encounter us and bereave us storm-weary men of life. How long must we warriors undergo these toils?"

King Etzel's champions had nigh granted this boon and let them leave the hall, but Kriemhild heard it and sorely it disliked her. Therefore the wanderers were speedily denied the truce. "Not so, ye Hunnish men. I counsel you in true fealty, that ye do not what ye have in mind, and let these murderers leave the hall, else must your kinsmen suffer a deadly fall. Did none of them still live, save Uta's sons, my noble brothers, and they came forth into the breeze and cooled their armor rings, ye would all be lost. Bolder heroes were never born into the world."

Then spake young Giselher: "Fair sister mine, full evil was my trust, when thou didst invite me from across the Rhine hither to this land, to this dire need. How have I merited death here from the Huns? I was aye true to thee; never did I do thee wrong, and in the hope that thou wast still my friend, dear sister mine, rode I hither to thy court. It cannot be but that thou grant us mercy."

"I will not grant you mercy, merciless is my mood. Hagen of Troneg hath done me such great wrongs that it may never be amended, the while I live. Ye must all suffer for this deed," so spake King Etzel's wife. "And ye will give me Hagen alone as hostage, I will not deny that I will let you live, for ye be my brothers and children of one mother, and will counsel peace with these heroes that be here."

"Now God in heaven forbid," spake Gernot; "were there here a thousand of us, the clansmen of thy kin, we'd rather all lie dead, than give thee a single man as hostage. Never shall this be done."

"We all must die," spake then Giselher, "but none shall hinder that we guard us in knightly wise. We be still here, if any list to fight us; for never have I failed a friend in fealty."

Then spake bold Dankwart (it had not beseemed him to have held his peace): "Forsooth my brother Hagen standeth not alone. It may yet rue those who here refuse the truce. I'll tell you of a truth, we'll make you ware of this."

Then spake the queen: "Ye full lusty heroes, now go nigher to the stairs and avenge my wrongs. For this I will ever serve you, as I should by right. I'll pay Hagen well for his overweening pride. Let none at all escape from the house, and I will bid the hall be set on fire at all four ends. Thus all my wrongs shall be well avenged."

Soon were King Etzel's champions ready still stood without into the hall with blows and shots. Mickle waxed the din, yet the lordings and their liegemen would not part. For very fealty they could not leave each other. Etzel's queen then bade the hall be set on fire, and thus they racked the bodies of the knights with fire and flame. Fanned by the breeze, the whole house burst into flames full soon. I ween, no folk did ever gain such great distress. Enow within cried out: "Alack this plight! We would much rather die in stress of battle. It might move God to pity, how we all are lost! The queen now wreaketh monstrously on us her wrath."

Quoth one of them within: "We must all lie dead. What avail us now the greetings which the king did send us? Thirst from this great heat giveth me such dole, that soon, I ween, my life must ebb away in anguish."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "Ye noble knights and good, let him whom pangs of thirst constrain, drink here this blood. In such

great heat, 'tis better still than wine. We can purvey us at this time none better."

One of the warriors hied him then to where he found a corpse, and knelt him down beside the wound; then he unbound his helmet and began to drink the flowing blood. However little went to such a drink, him thought it passing good: "Sir Hagen, now God requite you," spake the weary man, "that I have drunk so well at your advice; seldom hath better wine been proffered me. And I live yet a while, I shall ever be your friend."

When now the others heard this, it thought them good, and soon there were many more that drank the blood. From this the body of each gained much of strength; but many a stately dame paid dear for this through the loss of loving kin. Into the hall the fire fell thick and fast upon them, but with their shields they turned it from them to the ground. Both the heat and the smoke did hurt them sore; in sooth, I ween, that nevermore will such anguish hap to heroes.

Again Hagen of Troneg spake: "Stand by the sides of the hall. Let not the firebrands fall upon your helmet bands, but stamp them with your feet down deeper in the blood. Forsooth it is an evil feast which the queen doth give us here."

In such dire woes the night did wear away at last, and still the brave minstrel and his comrade Hagen stood before the hall, a-leaning on their shields. More scathe they awaited from those of Etzel's band. Then spake the fiddler: "Now go we into the hall. Then the Huns will ween, that we all be dead from the torture that hath been done us here. They'll yet see us go to meet them in the strife."

Now spake Giselher of Burgundy, the youth: "I trow the day dawneth, a cooling wind doth blow. May God in heaven let us live to see a liefer time, for my sister Kriemhild hath given us here an evil feast."

Again one spake: "I see the day. Sith we cannot hope for better things, so arm you, heroes, think on your life. Certes, King Etzel's wife will come to meet us soon again."

The host weened well, that his guests were dead from their toil and the pangs of fire; but yet within the hall six hundred brave men, as good as any knight that king ever gained, were still alive. Those set to guard the strangers had well seen that the guests still lived, despite the damage and the dole that had been done both to the lordings and their men. In the hall one saw them stand full safe and sound. They then told Kriemhild that many were still alive, but the queen replied: "It could never be, that any should have lived through such stress of fire. Rather will I believe that all lie dead."

The lordings and their men would still fain have lived, had any listed to do them mercy, but they could find none among those of the Hunnish land. So with full willing hand they avenged their dying. On this same day, towards morning, men proffered them a fierce attack as greeting, which brought the champions in stress again. Many a stout spear was hurled upon them, but the bold and lordly warriors warded them in knightly wise. High rose the mood of Etzel's men at the thought that they should earn Queen Kriemhild's gold. Thereto they were minded to perform whatso the King did bid them. Many of them because of this must soon needs gaze on death. Of pledges and of gifts one might tell wonders. She bade the ruddy gold be carried forth on shields and gave it to whomsoever craved it and would take it. Certes, greater wage was nevermore given against foes. To the hall a mickle force of well-armed warriors marched.

Then cried bold Folker: "We're here again, ye see. Never saw I heroes more gladly come to fight than these that have taken the king's gold to do us scathe."

Then enow did call: "Nearer, heroes, nearer, that we may do betimes what we must bring to an end. Here dieth none that is not doomed to die."

Soon their shields were seen sticking full of darts that had been thrown. What more can I say? Full twelve hundred men tried hard to match them, surging back and forth. The strangers cooled well their mood with wounds. None might part the strife, and so blood was seen to flow from mortal wounds, many of which were dealt. Each one was heard to wail for friends. All the great

king's doughty warriors died, and loving kinsmen mourned them passing sore.

ADVENTURE XXXVII. How Margrave Rudeger Was Slain.

The strangers had done full well at dawn. Meanwhile Gotelind's husband came to court. Bitterly faithful Rudeger wept when he saw the grievous wounds on either side. "Woe is me," quoth the champion, "that I was ever born, sith none may stay this mickle grief! However fain I would make for peace, the king will not consent, for he seeth ever more and more the sufferings of his men."

Then the good Knight Rudeger sent to Dietrich, if perchance they might turn the fate of the high-born kings. The king of Berne sent answer: "Who might now forfend? King Etzel will let none part the strife."

Then a Hunnish warrior, that saw Rudeger stand with weeping eyes, and many tears had he shed, spake to the queen: "Now behold how he doth stand, that hath the greatest power at Etzel's court and whom both lands and people serve. Why have so many castles been given to Rudeger, of which he doth hold such store from the king in fief? Not one sturdy stroke hath he dealt in all this strife. Methinks, he recketh not how it fare here at court, sith he hath his will in full. Men say of him, he be bolder than any other wight. Little hath that been seen in these parlous days."

Sad in heart the faithful vassal gazed at him whom he heard thus speak. Him-thought: "Thou shalt pay for this. Thou sayest, I be a craven, and hast told thy tale too loud at court."

His fist he clenched, then ran he at him and smote the Hunnish man so mightily that he lay dead at his feet full soon. Through this King Etzel's woe grew greater.

"Away, thou arrant coward," cried Rudeger, "forsooth I have enow of grief and pain, How dost thou taunt me, that I fight not here? Certes, I have good cause to hate the strangers, and would have done all in my power against them, had I not led the warriors hither. Of a truth I was their safeguard to my master's land. Therefore the hand of me, wretched man, may not strive against them."

Then spake Etzel, the noble king, to the margrave: "How have ye helped us, most noble Rudeger! We have so many fey in the land, that we have no need of more. Full evil have ye done."

At this the noble knight made answer: "Forsooth he grieved my mood and twitted me with the honors and the goods, such store of which I have received from thy hand. This hath cost the liar dear."

The queen, too, was come and had seen what fortune'd to the Huns through the hero's wrath. Passing sore she bewailed it; her eyes grew moist as she spake to Rudeger: "How have we deserved that ye should increase the sorrows of the king and me? Hitherto ye have told us, that for our sake ye would risk both life and honor. I heard full many warriors accord to you the palm. Let me mind you of your fealty and that ye swore, when that ye counseled me to Etzel, good knight and true, that ye would serve me till one of us should die. Never have I, poor woman, had such great need of this."

"There's no denying that I swore to you, my lady, for your sake I'd risk both life and honor, but I did not swear that I would lose my soul. 'Twas I that bade the high-born lordings to this feast."

Quoth she: "Bethink thee, Rudeger, of thy great fealty, of thy constancy, and of thine oaths, that thou wouldst ever avenge mine injuries and all my woes."

Said the margrave: "Seldom have I denied you aught."

Mighty Etzel, too, began implore; upon their knees they sank before the knight. Men saw the noble margrave stand full sad. Pitifully the faithful warrior spake: "Woe is me, most wretched man, that I have lived to see this day. I must give over all my honors, my fealty, and my courtesie, that God did bid me use. Alas, great God of heaven, that death will not turn this from me! I shall act basely and full evil, whatever I do or leave undone. But if I give over both, then will all people blame me. Now may he advise me, who hath given me life."

Still the king and the queen, too, begged unceasingly. Through this warriors must needs thereafter lose their lives at Rudeger's hands, when the hero also died. Ye may well hear it now, that he deported him full pitifully. He wist that it would bring him scathe and monstrous woe. Gladly would he have refused the king and queen. He feared full sore that if he slew but one of the strangers, the world would bear him hate.

Then the brave man addressed him to the king: "Sir King, take back again all that I have from you, my land with its castles, let not a whit remain to me. On foot will I wander into other lands."

At this King Etzel spake: "Who else should help me then? I'll give thee the land and all its castles, as thine own, that thou mayst avenge me on my foes. Thou shalt be a mighty king at Etzel's side."

Then answered Rudeger: "How shall I do this deed? I bade them to my house and home; in friendly wise I offered them both food and drink and gave them gifts. How may I counsel their death? People will lightly ween, that I be craven. No service of mine have I refused these noble lordings and their men. Now I rue the kinship I have gained with them. I gave my daughter to Giseler, the knight; to none in all the world could she have been better given, for courtesie and honor, for fealty and wealth. Never have I seen so young a prince of such right courteous mind."

Then Kriemhild spake again: "Most noble Rudeger, take pity on our griefs, on mine and on the king's. Bethink thee well, that king did never gain such baneful guests."

To the noble dame the margrave spake: "Rudeger's life must pay to-day for whatsoever favors ye and my lord have shown me. Therefore must I die; no longer may it be deferred. I know full well, that my castles and my lands will be voided for you to-day through the hand of one of these men. To your mercy I commend my wife and children and the strangers who be at Bechelaren."

"Now God requite thee, Rudeger," spake the king, and both he and the queen grew glad. "Thy people shall be well commended to our care. For mine own weal I trust thou too shalt go unscathed."

Etzel's bride began to weep. Then body and soul he staked upon the venture. He spake: "I must perform what I have vowed. Alas for my friends, whom I am loth to fight."

Men saw him go sadly from the presence of the king. Close at hand he found his warriors standing. He spake: "Ye must arm you all, my men, for, alas, I must needs encounter the bold Burgundians."

They bade the squires run nimbly to where lay their arms. Whether it were helm or buckler, 'twas all brought forth to them by their meiny. Later the proud strangers heard told baleful tales. Rudeger was now armed, and with him five hundred men; thereto he gained twelve champions, who would fain win renown in the stress of battle. They wist not that death drew nigh them. Then Rudeger was seen to march with helmet donned. The margrave's men bare keen-edged swords, and their bright shields and broad upon their arms. This the fiddler saw; greatly he rued the sight. When young Giseler beheld his lady's father walk with his helm upon his head, how might he know what he meant thereby, save that it portended good? Therefore the noble prince waxed passing merry of mood.

"Now well is me of such kinsmen," spake Knight Giseler, "whom we have won upon this journey; from my wife we shall reap much profit here. Lief it is to me, that this betrothal hath taken place."

"I know not whence ye take your comfort," spake then the minstrel; "when have ye seen so many heroes walk with helmets donned and swords in hand, for the sake of peace? Rudeger doth think to win his castles and his lands in fight with us."

Or ever the fiddler had ended his speech, men saw the noble Rudeger before the house. At his feet he placed his trusty shield, and now both service and greeting he must needs refuse his friends. Into the hall the noble margrave called: "Ye doughty Nibelungs, now guard you well on every side. Ye were to profit by me, now I shall bring you scathe. Aforetime we were friends, but of this troth I now would fain be rid."

The hard-pressed men were startled at this tale, for none gained aught of joy, that he whom they did love would now fain fight them. From their foes they had already suffered mickle stress of war. "Now God of heaven forbid," spake Gunther, the knight, "that

ye should give over your love of us and your great fealty, on which we counted of a truth. Better things I trow of you, than that ye should ever do this deed."

"Alas, I cannot give it over, but must fight you, for I have vowed it. Now ward you, brave heroes, and ye love your life. King Etzel's wife would not release me from mine oath."

"Ye declare this feud too late," spake the highborn king. "Now may God requite you, most noble Rudeger, for all the love and fealty that ye have shown us, if ye would only act more kindly at the end. I and my kinsmen, we ought ever to serve you for the noble gifts ye gave us, when ye brought us hither faithfully to Etzel's land. Now, noble Rudeger, think on this."

"How gladly would I grant you," spake Knight Rudeger, "that I might weigh out my gifts for you with full measure, as willingly as I had hoped, if I never should be blamed on that account."

"Turn back, noble Rudeger," spake then Gernot, "for host did never give his guests such loving cheer as ye did us. This shall profit you well, and we remain alive."

"Would to God," spake Rudeger, "most noble Gernot, that ye were on the Rhine and I were dead with passing honor, sith I must now encounter you! Never did friends act worse to heroes."

"Now God requite you, Sir Rudeger," answered Gernot, "for your passing rich gifts. Your death doth rue me, if such knightly virtues shall be lost with you. Here I bear your sword that ye gave me, good knight and true. It hath never failed me in all this need. Many a knight fell dead beneath its edges. It is bright and steady, glorious and good; nevertheless, I ween, will warrior give so rich a gift. And will ye not turn back, but come to meet us, and slay aught of the friends I still have here, with your own sword will I take your life. Then will ye rue me, Rudeger, ye and your high-born wife."

"Would to God, Sir Gernot, that this might come to pass, that all your will might here be done, and that your kinsmen escaped unscathed! Then both my daughter and my wife may trust you well, forsooth."

Then of the Burgundians there spake fair Uta's son: "Why do ye so, Sir Rudeger? Those that be come with us, do all like you well. Ye encounter us in evil wise; ye wish to make your fair daughter a widow far too soon. If ye and your warriors match me now with strife, how right unkindly do ye let it appear, that I trust you well above all other men and therefore won me your daughter to wife."

"Think on your fealty, most noble and high-born king. And God let you escape," so spake Rudeger, "let the maiden suffer not for me. For your own virtue's sake, vouchsafe her mercy."

"That I should do by right," spake the youthful Giseler, "but if my noble kinsmen here within must die through you, then my steadfast friendship for you and for your daughter must be parted."

"Now may God have mercy on us," answered the valiant man. Then they raised their shields, as though they would hence to fight the guests in Kriemhild's hall, but Hagen cried full loud adown the steps. "Pray tarry awhile, most noble Rudeger," so spake Hagen; "I and my lords would fain have further parley, as doth befit our need. What can the death of us wanderers avail King Etzel? I stand here in a fearful plight; the shield that Lady Gotelind gave me to bear hath been cut to pieces by the Huns. I brought it with friendly purpose into Etzel's land. O that God in heaven would grant, that I might bear so good a shield as that thou hast in thy hand, most noble Rudeger! Then I should no longer need a hauberk in the fray."

"Gladly would I serve thee with my shield, durst I offer it before Kriemhild. Yet take it, Hagen, and bear it on thine arm. Ho, if thou couldst only wield it in the Burgundian land!"

When he so willingly offered to give the shield, enow of eyes grew red with scalding tears. "T was the last gift that ever Rudeger of Bechelaren gave to any knight. However fierce Hagen, and however stern of mood, the gift did touch him, which the good hero, so near to death, had given. Many a noble knight gan mourn with him.

"Now God in heaven requite you, most noble Rudeger. Your like will nevermore be found, who giveth homeless warriors such lordly gifts. God grant that your courtesie may ever live." Again Hagen spake: "Woe is me of these tales, we had so many other

griefs to bear. Let complaint be made to heaven, if we must fight with friends."

Quoth the margrave: "Inly doth this grieve me."

"Now God requite you, for the gift, most noble Rudeger. Howso these high-born warriors deport them toward you, my hand shall never touch you in the fight, and ye slew them all from the Burgundian land."

Courteously the good Sir Rudeger bowed him low. On every side they wept, that none might soothe this pain of heart. That was a mighty grief. In Rudeger would die the father of all knightly virtues.

Then Folker, the minstrel, spake from out the hall: "Sith my comrade Hagen hath made his peace with you, ye shall have it just as steadfastly from my hand, for well ye earned it, when we came into this land. Most noble margrave, ye shall be mine envoy, too. The margravine gave me these ruddy arm rings, that I should wear them here at the feasting. These ye may yourself behold, that ye may later be my witness."

"Now God of heaven grant," spake Rudeger, "that the margravine may give you more! I'll gladly tell these tales to my dear love, if I see her in health again. Of this ye shall not doubt."

When he had vowed him this, Rudeger raised high his shield. No longer he bided, but with raging mood, like a berserker, he rushed upon the guests. Many a furious blow the noble margrave struck. The twain, Folker and Hagen, stepped further back, as they had vowed to him afore. Still he found standing by the tower such valiant men, that Rudeger began the fight with anxious doubts. With murderous intent Gunther and Gernot let him in, good heroes they! Giseler stood further back, which irked him sore, in truth. He voided Rudeger, for still he had hope of life. Then the margrave's men rushed at their foes; in knightly wise one saw them follow their lord. In their hands they bare their keen-edged swords, the which cleft there many a helm and lordly shield. The tired warriors dealt the men of Bechelaren many a mighty blow, that cut smooth and deep through the shining mail, down to the very quick.

Rudeger's noble fellowship was now come quite within. Into the fight Folker and Hagen sprang anon. They gave no quarter, save to one man alone. Through the hands of the twain the blood streamed down from the helmets. How grimly rang the many swords within! The shield plates sprang from their fastenings, and the precious stones, cut from the shields, fell down into the gore. So grimly they fought, that men will never do the like again. The lord of Bechelaren raged to and fro, as one who wotteth how to use great prowess in the fray. Passing like to a worshipful champion and a bold did Rudeger bear him on that day. Here stood the warriors, Gunther and Gernot, and smote many a hero dead in the fray. Giseler and Dankwart, the twain, recked so little, that they brought full many a knight to his last day of life. Full well did Rudeger make appear that he was strong enow, brave and well-armed. Ho, what knights he slew! This a Burgundian espied; perforce it angered him, and thus Sir Rudeger's death drew near.

The stalwart Gernot accosted the hero; to the margrave he spake: "It appeareth, ye will not leave my men alive, most noble Rudeger. That irketh me beyond all measure, no longer can I bear the sight. So may your present work you harm, sith ye have taken from me such store of friends. Pray address you unto me, most noble man and brave, your gift shall be paid for as best I can."

Or ever the margrave could reach his foe, bright armor rings must needs grow dull with blood. Then at each other sprang these honor-seeking men. Either gan guard him against mighty wounds. So sharp were their swords, that naught might avail against them. Then Rudeger, the knight, smote Gernot a buffet through his helmet, the which was as hard as flint, so that the blood gushed forth. But this the bold knight and good repaid eftsoon. High in his hand he now poised Rudeger's gift, and though wounded unto death, he smote him a stroke through his good and trusty shield down to his helmet band. And so fair Gotelind's husband was done to death. Certes, so rich a gift was never worse repaid. So fell alike both Gernot and Rudeger, slain in the fray, through each other's hand.

Then first waxed Hagen wroth, when he saw the monstrous scathe. Quoth the hero of Troneg: "Evil hath it fared with us. In

these two men we have taken a loss so great that neither their land nor people will e'er recover from the blow. Rudeger's champions must answer to us homeless men."

"Alas for my brother, who hath here been done to death. What evil tales I hear all time! Noble Rudeger, too, must ever rue me. The loss and the grievous wounds are felt on either side."

When Lord Giseler saw his betrothed's father dead, those within the hall were forced to suffer need. Fiercely death sought his fellowship; not one of those of Bechelaren escaped with life. Gunther and Giseler and Hagen, too, Dankwart and Folker, the right good knights, went to where they found the two men lying. Then by these heroes tears of grief were shed.

"Death doth sorely rob us," spake Giseler, the youth. "Now give over your weeping and go we bite the breeze, that the mailed armor of us storm-weary men may cool. Certes, I ween, that God in heaven vouchsafeth us no more to live."

This champion was seen to sit and that to lean against the wall, but all again were idle. Rudeger's heroes lay still in death. The din had died away; the hush endured so long, it vexed King Etzel.

"Alack for such services," spake the queen. "They be not so true, that our foes must pay with their life at Rudeger's hands. I trow, he doth wish to lead them back to the Burgundian land. What booteth it, King Etzel, that we have given him whatso he would? The knight hath done amiss, he who should avenge us, doth make his peace."

To this Folker, the full dapper knight, made answer: "This is not true, alas, most noble queen. Durst I give the lie to such a high-born dame, then had ye most foully lied against Rudeger. He and his champions be cozened in this peace. So eagerly he did what the king commanded, that he and all his fellowship lie here in death. Now look around you, Kriemhild, to see whom ye may now command. The good Knight Rudeger hath served you to his end. And ye will not believe the tale, we'll let you see."

To their great grief 'twas done; they bare the slain hero to where the king might see him. Never had there happened to Etzel's men a grief so great. When they saw the margrave borne forth dead, no scribe might write or tell the frantic grief of men and women, which there gan show itself from dole of heart. King Etzel's sorrow waxed so great that the mighty king did voice his woe of heart, as with a lion's roar. Likewise did his queen. Beyond all measure they bewailed the good Knight Rudeger's death.

ADVENTURE XXXVIII. How All Sir Dietrich's Warriors Were Slain.

On every side one heard a grief so great, that the palace and the towers rang with the wailing. Then a liegeman of Dietrich heard it, too. How quickly he gan haste him with the fearful tales! To the lord he spake: "Hear, my lord, Sir Dietrich, however much I've lived to see till now, yet heard I never such a monstrous wail, as now hath reached mine ears. I ween, King Etzel himself hath come to grief. How else might all be so distressed? One of the twain, the king or Kriemhild, hath sorely been laid low by the brave strangers in their wrath. Full many a dapper warrior weepeth passing sore."

Then spake the Knight of Borne: "My faithful men, now haste ye not too fast. Whatever the homeless warriors may have done, they be now in mickle need. Let it profit them, that I did offer them my peace."

At this brave Wolfhart spake: "I will hie me hence and ask for tidings of what they have done, and will tell you then, my most dear lord, just as I find it, what the wail may be."

Then spake Sir Dietrich: "Where one awaiteth wrath, and rude questions then are put, this doth lightly sadden the lofty mood of warriors. In truth, I will not, Wolfhart, that ye ask these questions of them."

Then he told Helfrich to hasten thither speedily, and bade him find from Etzel's men or from the guests themselves, what there had happened, for men had never seen from folks so great a grief. The messenger gan ask: "What hath here been done?"

At this one among them spake: "Whatever of joy we had in the Hunnish land hath passed away. Here lieth Rudeger, slain by the Burgundians' hands; and of those who were come with him, not one hath 'scaped alive."

Sir Helfrich could never have had a greater dole. Sorely weeping, the envoy went to Dietrich. Never was he so loth to tell a tale. "What have ye found for us?" quoth Dietrich. "Why weep ye so sore, Knight Helfrich?"

Then spake the noble champion: "I have good cause for wail. The Burgundians have slain the good Sir Rudeger."

At this the hero of Berne made answer: "Now God forbid. That were a fearful vengeance, over which the foul fiend would gloat. Wherewith hath Rudeger deserved this at their hands? I know full well, forsooth, he is the strangers' friend."

To this Wolfhart answered: "And have they done this deed, 'twill cost them all their lives. 'Twould be our shame, should we let this pass, for of a truth the hand of the good knight Rudeger hath served us much and oft."

The lord of the Amelungs bade learn it better. In bitter grief he sate him at a window and begged Hildebrand to hie him to the strangers, that he might find from them what had been done. The storm-brave warrior, Master Hildebrand, bare neither shield nor weapon in his hand. In courtly wise he would hie him to the strangers; for this he was chided by his sister's son. Grim Wolfhart spake: "And ye will go thither so bare, ye will never fare without upbraiding; ye must return with shame. But if ye go there armed, each will guard against that well."

Then the wise man armed him, through the counsel of youth. Or ever he was ware, all Dietrich's warriors had donned their war-weeds and held in their hands their swords. Loth it was to the hero, and he would have gladly turned their mind. He asked whither they would go.

"We will hence with you. Perchance Hagen of Troneg then will dare the less to address him to you with scorn, which full well he knoweth how to use." When he heard this, the knight vouchsafed them for to go.

Soon brave Folker saw the champions of Berne, the liegemen of Dietrich, march along, well armed, begirt with swords, while in their hands they bare their shields. He told it to his lords from out the Burgundian land. The fiddler spake: "Yonder I see the men of Dietrich march along in right hostile wise, armed cap-a-pie. They would encounter us; I ween 'twill go full ill with us strangers."

Meanwhile Sir Hildebrand was come. Before his feet he placed his shield, and gan ask Gunther's men: "Alas, good heroes, what had Rudeger done you? My Lord Dietrich hath sent me hither to you to say, that if the hand of any among you hath slain the noble margrave, as we are told, we could never stand such mighty dole."

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "The tale is true. How gladly could I wish, that the messenger had told you false, for Rudeger's sake, and that he still did live, for whom both man and wife may well ever weep."

When they heard aright that he was dead, the warriors made wail for him, as their fealty bade them. Over the beards and chins of Dietrich's champions the tears were seen to run. Great grief had happened to them.

Siegstap, the Duke of Berne, then spake: "Now hath come to an end the cheer, that Rudeger did give us after our days of dole. The joy of all wayfaring folk lieth slain by you, sir knights."

Then spake the Knight Wolfwin of the Amelungs: "And I saw mine own father dead to-day, I should not make greater dole, than for his death. Alas, who shall now comfort the good margrave's wife?"

Angry of mood Knight Wolfhart spake: "Who shall now lead the warriors to so many a fight, as the margrave so oft hath done? Alas, most noble Rudeger, that we should lose thee thus!"

Wolfbrand and Helfrich and Helmnot, too, with all their men bewailed his death. For sighing Hildebrand might no longer ask a whit. He spake: "Sir knights, now do what my lord hath sent you here to do. Give us the corse of Rudeger from out the hall, in whom our joy hath turned to grief, and let us repay to him the great fealty he hath shown to us and to many another man. We, too, be exiles, just as Rudeger, the knight. Why do ye let us wait thus? Let us bear him away, that we may yet requite the knight in death. More justly had we done it, when he was still alive."

Then spake King Gunther: "Never was there so good a service as that, which a friend doth do to a friend after his death."

When any doeth that, I call it faithful friendship. Ye repay him but rightly, for much love hath he ever shown you."

"How long shall we still beseech?" spake Knight Wolfhart. "Sith our best hope hath been laid low in death by you, and we may no longer have him with us, let us bear him hence to where the warrior may be buried."

To this Folker made answer: "None will give him to you. Fetch ye him from the hall where the warrior lieth, fallen in the blood, with mortal wounds. 'Twill then be a perfect service, which ye render Rudeger."

Quoth brave Wolfhart: "God wot, sir minstrel, ye have given us great dole and should not rouse our ire. But that I durst not for fear of my lord, ye should all fare ill. We must perforce abstain, sith he forbade us strife."

Then spake the fiddler: "He hath a deal too much fear who doth abstain from all that one forbiddeth him. That I call not a real hero's mood." This speech of his war comrade thought Hagen good.

"Long not for that," answered Wolfhart, "or I'll play such havoc with your fiddle strings, that ye'll have cause to tell the tale, when ye ride homeward to the Rhine. I cannot brook in honor your overweening pride."

Quoth the fiddler: "If ye put out of tune my strings, then must the gleam of your helmet grow dim from this hand of mine, however I ride to the Burgundian land."

Then would he leap at him, but his uncle Hildebrand grasped him firmly. "I ween, thou wouldest rage in thy silly anger. Then hadst thou lost forever the favor of my lord."

"Let go the lion, master, he is so fierce of mood," quoth the good knight Folker. "Had he slain the whole world with his one hand, I'll smite him, and he come within my reach, so that he may never sing the answer to my song."

At this the men of Berne waxed passing wroth of mood. Wolfhart, a doughty knight and a good, snatched up his shield. Like a wild lion he ran to meet him, swiftly followed by all his friends. But howsoever great the strides he took towards the hall, yet did old Hildebrand overtake him at the steps. He would not let him reach the fray before him. At the hands of the homeless knights they later found the strife they sought. Master Hildebrand then sprang at Hagen. In the hands of both one heard the swords ring out. That both were angry, might be plainly seen; from the swords of the twain streamed forth a blast of fire-red sparks. Then they were parted in the stress of battle by the men of Berne, as their strength did bid them. At once Hildebrand turned him away from Hagen, but stout Wolfhart addressed him to Folker the bold. Such a blow he smote the fiddler upon his good helmet, that the sword's edge pierced to the very helmet bands. This the bold gleeman repaid with might; he smote Wolfhart, so that the sparks flew wide. Enow of fire they struck from the armor rings, for each bare hatred to the other. Then Knight Wolfwin of Berne did part them—an' he be not a hero, never was there one.

With willing hand Gunther, the champion, greeted the heroes of the Amelung land. Lord Giseler made many a gleaming helmet red and wot with blood. Dankwart, Hagen's brother, a fierce man was he; whatever he had done before to Etzel's warriors in strife was as a wind to the fury with which bold Aldrian's son now fought. Ritschart and Gerbart, Helfrich and Wichart had spared themselves full seldom in many battle storms; this they now made Gunther's liegemen note full well. Wolfbrand, too, was seen in the strife bearing him in lordly wise. Old Hildebrand fought as though he raged. At Wolfhart's hands many good knights, struck by the sword, must needs fall dead down into the blood. Thus the bold champions and good avenged Knight Rudeger.

Then Lord Siegstab fought as his prowess bade him. Ho, what good helmets of his foes this son of Dietrich's sister clove in the strife! Nor might he ever do better in the fray. When sturdy Folker espied that bold Siegstab hewed a bloody stream from the hard armor rings, wroth of mood the hero grew. He sprang to meet him, and Siegstab lost his life full soon at the fiddler's hands, for Folker gave him such a sample of his art, that he soon lay dead, slain by his sword. This old Hildebrand avenged, as his might did bid him.

"Alas for my dear lord," spake Master Hildebrand, "who lieth here dead at Folker's hands. Now shall the fiddler no longer live."

How might bold Hildebrand ever be fiercer? Folker he smote, so that on all sides the clasps flew to the walls of the hall from helmet and shield of the doughty gleeman. Thus stout Folker was done to death. At this the men of Dietrich pressed forward to the strife. They smote so that the armor rings whirled far and wide, and high through the air the sword-points wore seen to fly. From the helmets they drew the warm gushing stream of blood. When Hagen of Troneg saw Folker dead, that was the greatest sorrow, that he had gained at the feasting in kinsman or in liegeman. Alas, how fiercely Hagen gan venge the knight! "Now old Hildebrand shall not profit by this deed. My helpmate lieth slain by the hero's hand, the best war comrade that I did ever win." Higher he raised his helmet, and ran, slashing as he went.

Stout Helfrich slew Dankwart. Loth enow it was to Gunther and Giseler, when they saw him fall in cruel need, but with his own hands he himself had well avenged his death. Meanwhile Wolfhart raged back and forth, hewing away King Gunther's men. For the third time he was come through the hall, and many a warrior fell, struck by his hands.

Then Lord Giseler cried out to Wolfhart: "Alas, that I have ever gained so grim a foe! Noble knight and brave, now address you unto me. I'll help to make an end; this may be no longer."

At this Wolfhart turned him in strife to Giseler, and each smote other many a gaping wound. He pressed so mightily toward the king, that the blood beneath his feet spouted high above his head. With grim and fearful blows the son of fair Uta then greeted the brave knight Wolfhart. However strong the warrior, he might not save his life. Never could so young a king have been more brave; Wolfhart he smote through his stout hauberk, that his blood streamed down from the wound. Unto death he wounded Dietrich's liegeman. None save a champion had done such deed. When brave Wolfhart felt the wound, he let fall his shield and lifted higher in his hand his mighty sword (sharp enow it was); through both helmet and armor rings the hero smote Giseler. Thus each did other fiercely unto death.

Now was none left of Dietrich's men. Old Hildebrand saw Wolfhart fall; never before his death, I ween, did such dole happen to him. The men of Gunther all lay dead, and those of Dietrich, too. Hildebrand hied him to where Wolfhart had fallen in the gore, and clasped in his arms the brave knight and good. He would fain bear him from the hall, but he was a deal too heavy, and so he must needs let him lie. Then the dying warrior looked upward from the blood in which he lay; well he saw, that his uncle would fain help him hence. Though wounded unto death, he spake: "Dear uncle mine, ye may not aid me now. 'Tis well, methinks, that ye should guard you against Hagen. A fierce mood he beareth in his heart. And if perchance my kinsmen would mourn me after I am dead; pray tell the nearest and the best, that they weep not for me; there is no need of that. At the hands of a king I have met a glorious death and have also avenged me, so that the wives of the good knights may well bewail it. If any ask you of this, ye may boldly say, that full a hundred lie slain by my hand alone."

Then Hagen, too, bethought him of the gleeman, whom bold Hildebrand had robbed of life. To the knight he spake: "Ye'll requite me now my sorrows. Through your hatred ye have bereft us of many a lusty knight."

He dealt Hildebrand such a blow, that men heard Balmung ring, the which bold Hagen had taken from Siegfried, when he slew the knight. Then the old man warded him; in sooth he was brave enow. Dietrich's champion struck with a broad sword, that cut full sore, at the hero of Troneg, but could not wound King Gunther's liegeman. Hagen, however, smote him through his well-wrought hauberk. When old Hildebrand felt the wound, he feared more scathe at Hagen's hand; his shield he slung across his back and thus Sir Dietrich's man escaped from Hagen, though sorely wounded.

Now of all the knights none was alive save the twain, Gunther and Hagen alone. Dripping with blood old Hildebrand went to where he found Dietrich, and told him the baleful tale. He saw him sitting sadly, but much more of dole the prince now gained. He

spied Hildebrand in his blood-red hauberk, and asked him tidings, as his fears did prompt him.

"Now tell me, Master Hildebrand, how be ye so wot with your lifeblood? Pray who hath done you this? I ween, ye have fought with the strangers in the hall. I forbade it you so sorely, that ye should justly have avoided it."

Then said he to his lord: "'Twas Hagen that did it. He dealt me this wound in the hall, when I would fain have turned me from the knight. I scarce escaped the devil with my life."

Then spake the Lord of Berne: "Rightly hath it happened you, for that ye have broken the peace, which I had sworn them, sith ye did hear me vow friendship to the knights. Were it not mine everlasting shame, ye should lose your life."

"My Lord Dietrich, now be ye not so wroth; the damage to my friends and me is all too great. Fain would we have carried Rudeger's corse away, but King Gunther's liegemen would not grant it us."

"Woe is me of these sorrows! If Rudeger then be dead, 'twill bring me greater dole, than all my woe. Noble Gotelind is the child of my father's sister; alas for the poor orphans, that be now in Bechelaren."

Rudeger's death now minded him of ruth and dole. Mightily the hero gan weep; in sooth he had good cause. "Alas for this faithful comrade whom I have lost! In truth I shall ever mourn for King Etzel's liegeman. Can ye tell me, Master Hildebrand, true tidings, who be the knight, that hath slain him there?"

Quoth he: "That stout Gernot did, with might and main, but the hero, too, fell dead at Rudeger's hands."

Again he spake to Hildebrand: "Pray say to my men, that they arm them quickly, for I will hie me hither, and bid them make ready my shining battle weeds. I myself will question the heroes of the Burgundian land."

Then spake Master Hildebrand: "Who then shall join you? Whatso of living men ye have, ye see stand by you. 'Tis I alone; the others, they be dead."

He started at this tale; forsooth, he had good cause, for never in his life had he gained so great a grief. He spake: "And are my men all dead, then hath God forgotten me, poor Dietrich. Once I was a lordly king, mighty, high, and rich." Again Sir Dietrich spake: "How could it hap, that all the worshipful heroes died at the hands of the battle-weary, who were themselves hard pressed? Were it not for mine ill-luck, death were still a stranger to them. Sith then mine evil fortune would have it so, pray tell me, are any of the strangers still alive?"

Then spake Master Hildebrand: "God wet, none other save only Hagen and Gunther, the high-born king."

"Alas, dear Wolfhart, and I have lost thee too, then may it well rue me, that ever I was born. Siegstab and Wolfwin and Wolfbrand, too! Who then shall help me to the Amelung land? Bold Helfrich, hath he, too, been slain, and Gerbart and Wiehart? How shall I ever mourn for them in fitting wise? This day doth forever end my joys. Alas, that none may die for very grief!"

ADVENTURE XXXIX. How Gunther And Hagen And Kriemhild Were Slain.

Then Sir Dietrich fetched himself his coat of mail, and Master Hildebrand helped him arm. The mighty man made wail so sore, that the whole house resounded with his voice. But then he gained again a real hero's mood. The good knight was now armed and grim of mind; a stout shield he hung upon his arm. Thus he and Master Hildebrand went boldly hence.

Then spake Hagen of Troneg: "Yonder I see Sir Dietrich coming hither; he would fain encounter us, after the great sorrow, that hath here befallen him. To-day we shall see, to whom one must give the palm. However strong of body and grim of mood the lord of Berne thinketh him to be, right well dare I match him," so spake Hagen, "an' he will avenge on us that which hath been done him."

Dietrich and Hildebrand heard this speech, for Hagen came to where he found the champion stand before the house, leaning against the wall. Dietrich set his good shield upon the ground,

and spake in grievous dole: "Gunther, mighty king, why have ye so acted against me, banished man? What have I done to you? I stand alone, bereft of all my comfort. Ye thought it not enow of bitter need, when ye did kill Knight Rudeger, our friend. Now ye have robbed me of all my men. Forsooth I never had wrought you heroes sorrow such as this. Think on yourselves and on your wrongs. Doth not the death of your kinsmen and all the hardship grieve the minds of you good knights? Alas, what great dole Rudeger's death doth give me! Never in all the world hath more of sorrow happened to any man. Ye thought but little on me and on your pain. Whatsoever joy I had, that lieth slain by you. Certes, I never can bewail my kin enow."

"Forsooth we be not so guilty," answered Hagen. "Your warriors came to this hall in a large band, armed with care. Methinks the tale hath not been told you rightly."

"What else should I believe? Hildebrand told me, that when my knights from the Amelung land asked that ye should give up Rudeger's corse from out the hall, ye did naught but mock the valiant heroes from above the steps."

Then spake the king from the Rhine: "They said, that they would fain bear Rudeger hence, and I bade this be denied them to vex King Etzel, and not thy men, until then Wolfhart began to rail about it."

Then the hero of Berne made answer: "Fate would have it so. Gunther, most noble king, now through thy courtesie requite me of the wrongs, that have happened to me from thee, and make such amends, brave knight, that I may give thee credit for the deed. Give thyself and thy men to me as hostages, and I will guard you, as best I may, that none here do thee aught among the Huns. Thou shalt find me naught but good and true."

"Now God forbid," quoth Hagen, "that two knights give themselves up to thee, that still do stand opposed to thee so doughtily and walk so unfettered before their foes."

"Gunther and Hagen, ye should not deny me this," spake Dietrich. "Ye have grieved my heart and mind so sore, that it were but right, and ye would requite me. I give you my hand and troth as pledge, that I will ride with you, home to your land. I'll lead you in all honor, or else lie dead, and for your sakes I will forget my grievous wrongs."

"Crave this no longer," answered Hagen. "'Twere fitting, that the tale be told of us, that two men so brave had given themselves up to you. We see none standing by you, save Hildebrand alone."

Then up spake Master Hildebrand: "God wot, Sir Hagen, the hour will come, when ye will gladly take the peace, if so be any offer to keep it with you. Ye might well content you with the truce my lord doth offer."

"Forsooth I'd take the truce," quoth Hagen, "or ever I'd flee from out a hall so shamefully as ye did, Master Hildebrand. I weened, ye could stand better against a foe."

To this Hildebrand made answer: "Why twit ye me with that? Who was it sate upon a shield hard by the Waskstone, when Walter of Spain slew so many of his kin? Ye, too, have faults enow of your own to show."

Then spake Sir Dietrich: "Ill doth it beseem heroes, that they should scold like aged beldams. I forbid you, Hildebrand, to speak aught more. Grievous wrongs constrain me, homeless warrior. Let's hear, Knight Hagen, what ye twain did speak, ye doughty men, when ye saw me coming toward you armed? Ye said, that ye alone would fain encounter me in strife."

"Certes, none doth deny," Knight Hagen spake, "that I will essay it here with mighty blows, unless be, that the sword of Nibelung break in my hand. Wroth am I, that we twain have here been craved as hostages."

When Dietrich noted Hagen's raging mood, quickly the doughty knight and good snatched up his shield. How swiftly Hagen sprang toward him from the steps! Loudly the good sword of Nibelung rang on Dietrich's head. Then wist Dietrich well, that the bold knight was grim of mood. The lord of Berne gan guard him against the fearful blows, for well he knew Hagen, the stately knight. Balmung he also feared, a weapon stout enow. Dietrich returned the blows at times in cunning wise, until at last he conquered Hagen in the strife. A wound he dealt him, the which was deep and long. Then Lord Dietrich thought him: "Thou art worn

out with strife; little honor shall I have, and thou liest dead before me. I will try, if perchance I can force thee to be my hostage."

This he wrought with danger. His shield he let fall, great was his strength, and clasped Hagen of Troneg in his arms. Thus the brave knight was overcome by Dietrich. Noble Gunther gan wail thereat. Dietrich now bound Hagen and led him to where he found the highborn queen; into her hand he gave the bravest warrior that ever bare a sword. Then merry enow she grew after her great dole. For very joy King Etzel's wife bowed low before the knight. "May thy heart and body be ever blest. Thou hast well requited me of all my woes. For this will I ever serve thee, unless be, that death doth hinder me therefrom."

Then spake Lord Dietrich: "Pray let him live, most noble queen. And if this still may be, how well will I requite you of that which he hath done you! Let him not suffer, because ye see him stand here bound."

She bade Hagen then be led away to duress, where he lay locked in and where none did see him. Gunther, the high-born king, began to call: "Whither went the knight of Berne? He hath done me wrong."

At this Lord Dietrich went to meet him. Gunther's might was worthy of praise; no more he bided, but ran outside the hall, and from the clashing of the swords of the twain a mighty din arose. However much and long Lord Dietrich's prowess had been praised, yet Gunther was so sorely angered and enraged, for because of the grievous dole, he was his deadly foe, that men still tell it as a wonder, that Sir Dietrich did not fall. Great were both their prowess and their strength. The palace and the towers resounded with the blows, when with the swords they hewed at the sturdy helmets. King Gunther was of lordly mood, but the knight of Berne overcame him, as happened to Hagen afore. The hero's blood was seen to ooze through the armor rings, drawn forth by a keen-edged sword, the which Sir Dietrich bare. Though weary, Sir Gunther had guarded him most valiantly. The lord was now bound by Dietrich's hands. Though kings should not endure such bonds, yet Dietrich thought, if he set free the king and his liegeman, that all they met must needs fall dead at their hands.

Dietrich of Berne now took him by the hand and led him bound to where he found Kriemhild. At sight of his sorrow much of her fear took flight. She spake: "Welcome, Gunther, from the Burgundian land."

Quoth he: "I would bow before you, dear sister mine, if your greetings were but kinder. I know you, queen, to be so wroth of mood that ye do give me and Hagen meagre greetings."

Up spake the knight of Berne: "Most noble queen, never were such good knights made hostages, as I have given you in them, exalted lady. For my sake, I pray you, spare these homeless men."

She vowed she'd do it gladly. Then Sir Dietrich left the worshipful knights with weeping eyes. Later Etzel's wife avenged her grimly; she took the life of both the chosen heroes. To make their duress worse she let them lie apart, so that neither saw the other, till she bare her brother's head to Hagen. Kriemhild's vengeance on both was great enow.

Then the queen went to Hagen. In what right hostile wise she spake to the knight: "If ye will give me back what ye have taken from me, then ye may still go home alive to Burgundy."

Grim Hagen answered: "Thou dost waste thy words, most noble queen. Forsooth I have sworn an oath, that I would not show the hoard, the while and any of my lords still live; so I shall give it to none."

"I'll make an end of this," quoth the high-born wife. Then she bade her brother's life be taken. His head they struck off, and by the hair she bare it to the knight of Troneg. Loth enow it was to him. When sad of mind the warrior gazed upon his master's head, he spake to Kriemhild: "Thou hast brought it to an end after thy will, and it hath happened, as I had thought me. The noble king of Burgundy now lieth dead, and Giseler, the youth, and Sir Gernot, too. None knoweth of the treasure now save God and me, and it shall ever be hid from thee, thou fiend."

Quoth she: "Ye have requited me full ill, so I will keep the sword of Siegfried, the which my sweetheart bare, when last I saw him, in whom dole of heart hath happened to me through you."

From the sheath she drew it, nor could he hinder her a whit. She planned to rob the knight of life. With her hands she raised it and struck off his head. This King Etzel saw, and sore enow it rued him. "Alack!" cried the lording, "how lieth now dead at a woman's hands the very best of knights, that ever came to battle or bare a shield! However much I was his foe, yet it doth grieve me sorely."

Then spake old Hildebrand: "Forsooth it shall not boot her aught, that she durst slay him. Whatso hap to me, and however much it may bring me to a dangerous pass, yet will I avenge bold Troneg's death."

Hildebrand sprang in wrath towards Kriemhild. For fear of him she suffered pain; but what might it avail her, that she shrieked so frightfully? He dealt the queen a grievous sword-blow, the which did cut the high-born dame in twain. Now all lay low in death whom fate had doomed. Dietrich and Etzel then began to weep; sorely they mourned both kin and liegemen. Their mickle honors lay there low in death; the courtiers all had grief and dreariness. The king's high feast had ended now in woe, as joy doth ever end in sorrow at the last. I cannot tell you, that which happened thereafter, save that knights and ladies and noble squires were seen to weep for the death of loving kinsmen. The tale hath here an end. This is the Nibelungs' fall.

Gudrun

Tale the First. HOW HAGEN WAS CARRIED OFF BY THE GRIFFIN.

In olden days in Ireland
a king to greatness came
Who bore the name of Sigeband;
Ger was his father's name.
Queen U-te was his mother;
she of a king was daughter;
High was her worth and goodness,
and well her love beseemed the lord who sought her.
The sway of Ger was mighty,
as unto all is known;
He many lands and castles
and lordships seven did own:
Four thousand knights or over
he thence was often leading,
And wealth, and name yet greater,
he daily won, with those who did his bidding.
Now the youthful Sigeband
to his father's court must go,
That he might there be learning
all he had need to know,—
To bear the spear in riding,
to thrust it, and to shield him,
That when he met the foeman,
the better fame thereby the fight would yield him.
That age he now was reaching
when he the sword might bear;
Of all that a knight befiteth
he learned a goodly share.
This from kin and vassals
praise unmeasured brought him;
For this he still was striving,
and of the toil it cost he ne'er bethought him.
A few short days thereafter
death came among them all,
As even to men the greatest
sadly doth befall.
In every land and kingdom
the truth of this we're meeting,
And we, with heavy sorrow,
such news ourselves must every day be waiting.
Sigeband's mother, U-te,
the widow's seat must take;
Her son, so high and worthy,
left all things for her sake.
No whit he cared for wedlock,
and had no heart for wooing;
Many a queenly lady
at this was sad, young Sigeband's sorrow ruing.
A worthy wife to find him
his mother him besought;
So might he and his kingdom
to greater name be brought;
And he with all his kindred,
after their bitter sorrow
For the death of the king, his father,
might for themselves no little gladness borrow.

The teaching of his mother
he heard in kindly mood,
And began at once to follow,
as that of a friend one should.
The best of high-born maidens,
'mong those in Norway dwelling,
He bade his men to sue for:
to help in this he found his kinsmen willing.
She soon to him was wedded,
as hath of old been said.
With her, among her followers,
came many a lovely maid,
And, from over Scotland's border,
seven hundred warriors fully;
They came with her right gladly,
when the worth of the king was known to them more truly.
Proudly their way they wended,
as beseemed the maiden's birth;
With all the care they led her
befitting his kingly worth;
Hidden were the roadways
by gazers without number,
Who hastened to behold her;
for three miles and a half the throngs the ways did cumber.
Where'er along the roadside
the path with green was spread,
Flowers and grass were trampled,
by crowds, with heavy tread.
It fell upon that season
when the leaves are springing,
And in every copse and thicket
all the birds their best of songs are singing.
Of simple folk and merry
there rode with her enough;
While many loaded horses
bore much costly stuff,
Brought there from her birthland
by followers of the maiden;
They came with her by thousands,
with gold as well as clothing heavy-laden.
On the shore of two wide marches,
the dwellers by the sea,
As they saw the west wind waft her,
gave her welcome free;
They found a seemly lodging
for the lovely, well-born lady,
And brought her all things needful,
by the youthful king, before, for her made ready.
The fair young maid they welcomed
with knightly tournament;
Not soon their games they ended,
when on the spear-fight bent.
To the land of Ger his father
they bore her to be wedded;
She there was loved and mighty,
and men to sound her name she never needed.
All, as they were able,
waited on the maid;

The gaudy cloth for her saddle
 down to the grass was spread;
 The horses' hoofs were hidden
 by the housing, heavy drooping.
 Aha! In mood how gleeful
 was Ireland's lord, once more a blessing hoping!
 When now the time was fitting
 that he the maid should kiss,
 All crowded thick about him,
 in haste to see their bliss.
 The bosses of their bucklers
 were now heard loudly clashing,
 Struck with blows together;
 each strove to shun the throngs, in uproar crashing.
 Now with the dawn of morning,
 they sent out, far and wide,
 To give to all the tidings
 of the coming of the bride,
 And that, with their master,
 they erelong would crown her.
 His queen she was thereafter,
 and well she earned from him the honor shown her.
 It was not deemed becoming
 that he his love should plight,
 Since she by birth was queenly,
 and he not yet a knight:
 He first, before his lieges,
 must the crown be wearing;
 To this his kinsmen helped him,
 and later of his worth were all men hearing.
 He, with knights five hundred,
 then was dubbed with the sword;
 Whatever they could wish for
 was given them at his word,—
 Both shields, and, for their wearing,
 every kind of clothing.
 The youthful king so dauntless,
 thro' life, of fame and honor wanted nothing.
 For many a day thereafter
 his sway did Ireland bless,
 And never did his greatness
 at any time grow less.
 To all he freely listened;
 the poor man's wrongs he righted;
 Widely known was his goodness;
 no truer knight than he his word e'er plighted.
 His boundless acres yielded
 a full and ready gain;
 His wife was known for wisdom,
 and worthy to be his queen.
 To hold her as their mistress
 full thirty lords it bootied;
 As long as the sway she wielded,
 her hand to each his lands and home allotted.
 She bore unto her husband,
 within the next three years,
 A child to see most comely;
 (such is the tale one hears.)
 When later he was christened,
 and they were told to name him,
 They gave the name of Hagen;
 and never since, the tale of his life doth shame him.
 He had most careful breeding,
 and kindly was he nursed;
 Should he be like his fathers,
 he would of knights be first.
 Watched over by wise women,
 and by maidens of early age,
 His father and fond mother
 found in his face their glad eyes' pasturage.
 When now the boy, well fostered,
 to his seventh year was bred,

'Twas seen that he by warriors
 by the hand was often led.
 He was happy in men's teaching,
 but was with women wearied;
 All this he knew no longer;
 for, torn from them, he far away was carried.
 Whene'er to him it happened
 weapons at court to see,
 He understood them readily,
 and their wearer longed to be;
 The helmet and ringed armor
 would he have put on gladly:
 Alas! not long he saw them,
 and all his hopes of fighting ended sadly.
 While the kingly Sigeband,
 beneath a cedar-tree,
 One day on the turf was seated,
 the queen said earnestly:
 "Although good name and riches
 we share with one another,
 At one thing yet I wonder,
 and this from you I dare to hide no further."
 He asked of her: "What is it?"
 Then said his helpmeet kind:
 "It me doth sorely worry
 in body and in mind,
 And my heart, alas! is heavy;
 to my wish you give no heeding,
 To see you 'midst your vassals,
 my beaming eyes with pride upon you feeding."
 The king to her thus answered:
 "How should it ever be
 That you have had such longing
 me with my knights to see?
 I will strive thy will to follow,
 of this think not so sadly;
 Ever to meet thy wishes,
 both care and toil will I give myself most gladly."
 She said: "No man is living
 who owns such wealth, I trow,
 Who has so many castles
 or lands so wide as thou,
 With silver and gems so costly,
 and gold so heavy weighing;
 For this are our ways too lowly,
 and nought there is in life to me worth saying.
 "When erst I was a maiden,
 and on Scotland's soil drew breath,
 (Chide not, my lord, thy helpmeet,
 but list to what she saith,)
 I there was daily seeing
 the liegemen of my father
 For highest prizes striving;
 but here such games we never see together.
 "A king so rich and mighty,
 as you in name have been,
 Before his followers often
 should let himself be seen;
 He oft should ride in tilting
 with other champions knightly,
 That both himself and his kingdom
 should seem more fair, and hold their rank more fitly.
 "It shows, in a lord so noble,
 a most unworthy mind,
 When he has heaped together
 riches of every kind,
 If he with his faithful warriors
 to share them is unwilling;
 When men in the storm of warfare
 deep wounds have had, how else can they find healing?"
 Then said to her King Sigeband:
 "Lady, you mock at me;

In all these warlike pastimes
 I will most earnest be;
 And for the strife so worthy
 my wish shall never waver:
 No man shall find it easy
 the ways of well-born kings to teach me ever.”
 She said: “You now for warriors
 must send throughout the land;
 Stores of wealth and clothing
 must be given with open hand.
 I too will send out heralds
 my kinsmen all to rally,
 And to show them my good wishes;
 we then shall find our life to pass more gaily.”
 At this the king of Ireland
 unto his wife thus said:
 “I yield to you most willingly,
 for men are often led
 By the wishes of fair women
 great feastings to make ready;
 I therefore now will gather
 my brave and hardy kinsmen, and those too of my lady.”
 To him the queen then answered:
 “Sorrow no more I wear;
 Five hundred women’s garments
 I will give, to each her share;
 To four and sixty maidens
 gay clothes to give I’m willing.”
 Then the king did tell her
 high times he soon would hold, his word fulfilling.
 The sports were then bespoken:
 he bade his men to send,
 In eighteen days or sooner,
 to liegeman and to friend,
 To say to all in Ireland,
 who would in his games be riding,
 That, after summer was ended,
 they should spend the winter, with him abiding.
 He bade his men make benches,
 so our tale doth run,
 And for these, from out the wilderness,
 timber must be drawn;
 For sixty thousand warriors
 seats must they make ready.
 His henchmen and deft stewards,
 to do this work for the king, were skilled and speedy.
 Thither men then hastened
 on many a winding way;
 All were kindly cared for
 throughout their lengthened stay.
 Now from Ireland’s kingdom,
 as the king had bidden,
 Full six and eighty thousand
 of warriors strong there to his court had ridden.
 From the store-rooms of the castle
 clothing now was borne,—
 All the gear they wished for,
 and all that could be worn.
 Shields were also given,
 and steeds of Irish breeding;
 The proud and queenly lady
 bedecked her guests with all they could be needing.
 She gave to a thousand women
 costly clothes enow,
 And likewise to fair maidens
 what one to youth should allow,—
 Brodered bands and jewels,
 and silk that glistened brightly;
 The many lovely ladies,
 together standing there, were fair and sightly.
 To every one who wished it
 were given clothes well-made.

Horses were there seen prancing,
 by the hand of foot-boys led;
 These light shields did carry,
 and their spears were seizing.
 U-te, the queenly mother,
 was gladly seen, as she on the leads sat gazing.
 The guests by the king were bidden
 freely in tilts to meet;
 The glitter of their helmets
 grew dim in the dust and heat.
 The ladies, held in honor,
 near by were also seated,
 Where they the deeds of the warriors
 saw full well, and with words of wonder greeted.
 As oft before has happened,
 the show had lasted long;
 The king was not unwilling
 to be looked on by the throng.
 This, meanwhile, to his lady
 happiness was giving,
 As she, amidst her women,
 sat on the roof, and saw their earnest striving.
 When now her lord had ridden,
 as doth beseem a king,
 He thought to end their onsets;
 some rest to them to bring
 He deemed not unbecoming;
 to stop the games he bade them.
 And then before the ladies,
 after their skill thus shown, he proudly led them.
 U-te, the high-born lady,
 began her friends to greet,
 With those from far-off kingdoms;
 them as guests to meet
 The queen was truly willing;
 on them her glad eyes rested.
 The gifts of Lady U-te
 were not on scornful friends that evening wasted.
 Knights and lovely ladies
 together there were seen.
 The good-will of the master
 to all well-known had been;
 In all their games and tilting,
 his kindness was not hidden.
 Once more the guests, that evening,
 to ride in warlike strife by him were bidden.
 Their games and sports had lasted
 until nine days were gone;
 They, as knights befitteth,
 their skill to the king had shown.
 By the many wandering players
 the show was liked the better,
 And they plied their work more briskly,
 and hoped that their reward would be the greater.
 Sackbuts loud and trumpets
 there might all men hear;
 Fluting too and harping
 fell upon the ear.
 Some on the rote were playing,
 others in song were vying;
 They, by their jigs and fifing,
 soon would better clothes for themselves be buying.
 On the tenth morn it happened,
 (now hark to my sorry tale.)
 That, after all their pastimes,
 there rose a bitter wail.
 About these days so merry
 new tales were told on the morrow;
 And tho’ they now were mirthful,
 they came to know deep gloom and heavy sorrow.
 When the guests were seated
 beside their kingly host,

There came to them a player,
and proudly made his boast
That he, before all others,
(who should indeed believe him?)
Was far more skilled in playing,
and even the greatest lords their ear must give him.
Outside, a lovely maiden
was leading by the hand
The little son of Sigeband
who swayed the Irish land;
With him were likewise women
who to the boy gave heeding,
And friendly kinsmen also,
who carefully taught the child, and oversaw his breeding.
Within the great king's palace
was heard a din and shout;
All were there heard laughing,
the roomy walls throughout.
The guardians of young Hagen
crowded up too nearly,
And thus lost sight of the maiden,
together with the child they loved so dearly.
The evil luck of their master
to him that day drew near,
And brought to him and U-te
sudden woe and fear.
Sent by the wicked devil,
from afar his herald hasted
To them in their happy kingdom;
they were by this with sorrow sorely wasted.
It was a strong, wild griffin
had quickly thither flown;
From the little boy of Sigeband,
who ever care had known,
Came ill luck to his father,
who soon of this was tasting.
His son, so well-belovéd,
to him was lost, with the mighty bird far hasting.
A shadow now came o'er them,
from wings that bore him fleet,
As if a cloud had risen;
great strength had the bird, I weet.
The guests, in pastime busy,
no thought to this had given,
And the maid, with the child she was leading,
was standing now alone, unheeded even.
Beneath the weight of the griffin
forest trees broke down;
And now the trusty maiden
looked where the bird had flown;
Then she herself sought shelter,
and left the child forsaken.
Hearing a tale so startling,
one truly might the whole for a wonder reckon.
The griffin soon alighted,
and in his claws he held
The little child, gripped tightly,
while with fear it quailed.
His ghastly mood and anger
the bird was harshly showing;
This must knights and kinsmen
long bewail, with sorrow ever growing.
The boy was sorely frightened,
and began aloud to shriek;
Higher the mighty griffin
flew, with outstretched beak;
To the clouds above them floating
he his prey was bearing,
Sigeband, lord of Ireland,
loudly wept, his outcries never sparing.
His friends and all his kinsmen
the sorry tale soon heard;

They, in the death of his offspring,
his bitter sorrow shared.
Downcast were he and his lady,
and all their loss felt nearly;
Sorely they wept together,
mourning the boy, now torn from them so early.
In this their mood so gloomy,
the happy, merry plays
Must now be sadly ended.
Before their frightened gaze,
The griffin so had robbed them
that all for home now started,
Sober, and filled with sadness.
They truly felt forlorn, and heavy-hearted.
The king was bitterly weeping,
his breast with tears was wet;
The high-born queen besought him
his sorrows to forget,
Thus wisely to him speaking:
"Should all in death be stricken,
There must be an end of all things;
it is the will of God their lives hath taken."
Now all would hence be faring,
but the queen to them did say:
"I beg you, knights and warriors,
longer with us to stay;
Our gifts of gold and silver,
that here for you are ready,
You should not think of meanly;
our love for you is ever true and steady."
The knights to her bowed lowly,
and then began they all
To say how they were thankful.
The king, thereon, did call
For silken stuffs, the richest,
for all who there yet tarried;
They had ne'er been cut nor opened;
and from far-off lands had erst to the king been carried.
He gave them also horses,
both palfreys and war-steeds;
The horses out of Ireland
were tall and of hardy breeds.
Red gold was likewise given,
and silver without weighing;
The king with care had bidden
outfit good for his guests, no longer staying.
Soon as the queen was willing,
each her leave now takes,
Both lovely maids and women;
each one herself bedecks
With gifts that made her fairer;
all new clothes are wearing.
The high times now are ended;
Sigeband's land they leave, and are homeward faring.

Tale the Second. HOW HAGEN SLEW THE GRIFFIN.

Of how their stay was ended
I will speak no longer here;
Now I tell you further
of the rushing flight in the air,
That the child with the angry griffin
far away was bearing.
For this his friends and kinsmen
long in their hearts were heavy sorrow wearing.
Because the Lord so willed it
the child was not yet dead;
But, none the less, he later
a life of sadness led,
After the harsh old griffin
back to his nestlings bore him.

When on their prey they gloated,
 hard toil enough the boy had now before him.
 Soon as the bird that bore him
 did on his nest alight,
 He dropped the boy he carried,
 and in his claws held tight;
 One of the young ones caught him:
 that he did not devour him
 Thanks to God thereafter
 were given, far and wide, for the watch kept o'er him.
 Else the birds had slain him,
 and with their claws had torn.
 Now listen all with wonder,
 and his bitter sorrow learn:
 Hear how the king of Ireland
 then from death was shielded;
 Him a young bird now carried,
 strongly clutched, and naught of his grip he yielded.
 From tree to tree in the forest
 he with the boy took flight;
 The bird a little too boldly
 trusted his strength and might.
 Upon a branch he lighted,
 but now to the ground must flutter,
 For he was much too heavy;
 in the nest to have longer staid had methinks been better.
 The child, while the bird was falling,
 broke from him away,
 And hid among the bushes,
 a little, lorn estray;
 Well-nigh was he to starving,
 'twas long since food he tasted.
 Yet on a day long after
 the hopes of women in Ireland on him rested.
 God doth many a wonder,
 truly one may say.
 By the craft of the mighty griffin,
 it came to pass one day,
 Three daughters fair of princes
 had been taken thither,
 And now near by were dwelling.
 No man can tell how there they lived together,
 And how, thro' days so many,
 their lives to them were spared,
 Were it not that God in heaven
 for them in kindness cared.
 Hagen now no longer
 need live without a fellow;
 Those good and lovely maidens
 soon found the little waif in a rocky hollow.
 When, crawling to his hiding,
 they the child did see,
 It might, so thought the maidens,
 a dwarfish goblin be,
 Or perhaps it was a water-oaf,
 from out the sea up-driven;
 But when the boy came near them,
 at once a welcome kind to him was given.
 Hagen was ware of the maidens,
 as into their cave they stole,
 While with fear and sadness
 their little hearts were full,
 Before they yet had knowledge
 that they a Christian greeted.
 But the care they later showed him
 lifted the pain from many hearts o'erweighted.
 First spake the eldest maiden:
 "How darest thou in our cave,
 Where from the God of heaven
 we home and shelter have?
 Go, seek again thy playmates,
 the billowy waters under;

Enough ourselves we sorrow,
 and on our bitter lot in sadness ponder."
 The high-born child then answered:
 "I pray you let me stay;
 I truly am a Christian,
 you must not say me nay.
 One of the griffins seized me,
 and to the cave did carry;
 I cannot live all lonely,
 and here with you would I most gladly tarry."
 Then to the child so friendless
 they loving welcome gave;
 But they of his worth thereafter
 did better knowledge have.
 They now could ask him only,
 whence he had been stolen;
 But, such was then his hunger,
 in telling his tale, his heart was full and swollen.
 Then spake the little foundling:
 "Food I sorely need;
 Give to me, in kindness,
 a little drink and bread.
 'Tis long since I have had it,
 and now three days I'm fasting,
 The while the griffin bore me,
 and full a hundred miles was hither hasting."
 Then answered one of the maidens:
 "Our lot it so hath been,
 That we our wonted cup-bearers
 never here have seen;
 Neither our lordly steward,
 who should food to us be giving."
 Still they praised God's goodness;
 altho' their years were few, they were wisely living.
 A search they soon were making
 for roots and herbage wild,
 Wherewith they hoped to strengthen
 Sigeband's darling child.
 Such food as they had lived on
 they gave to him most freely;
 To him 'twas a meal unwonted,
 but such as they long time had eaten daily.
 Yet he needs must eat it,
 for hunger sore he hath,
 And hard it is to any
 to meet with bitter death.
 Thro' all the days so dreary,
 while with the maidens dwelling,
 To them his help most willing
 he ever gave, his thankfulness thus telling.
 They, too, had him in keeping,
 that can I say for truth;
 He there grew up in sadness,
 throughout his early youth;
 Until, one day, the children,
 to make them greatly sorrow,
 Before their cavern-dwelling
 saw wonders rise, that threatened more to-morrow.
 I know not from what border,
 tossing o'er sea to land,
 Came to those shores so rocky
 a holy pilgrim band.
 The ground-swell it was heavy,
 and rocked the bark full sorely;
 Thereat the banished maidens
 felt their care and sorrow growing hourly.
 Soon the ship was shattered;
 not one his life could save.
 Quickly the stern old griffins
 came down beside the wave;
 Seizing many drowned ones,
 back to their nest they hurried.

Many a woman was mourning,
soon as the sorry tale to her was carried.
When to the hungry nestlings
the food they took in haste,
Back again the griffins
came from their offspring's nest;
From what far spot I know not,
along the sea-paths flying.
Their young they left on the hillside,
with a neighbor grim, while they were hither hieing.
One day the goods of the sailors
Hagen saw near the sea,
For many had been drowned there;
holy men were they.
He thought, among the wreckage,
food might still lie hidden;
But, through fear of the wicked griffins,
he softly crept to the shore, by hunger bidden.
No one could he find there,
but a body in armor alone;
Thereby the wild old griffin
hard work would give him soon.
Out from his armor he shook him,
nor did he spurn to wear it:
He found a bow and weapons,
by its side, on the sandy shore, lying near it.
With these himself he girded,
that simple little child;
When in the air above him
he heard a rushing wild.
He wished that he had loitered,
the sorry little master;
But quickly came the griffin;
to the sheltering cavern fain would he flee the faster.
The bird swung down in anger
to the sandy beach and foam;
The little playmate and fellow
of the young it left at home,
Would by the angry griffin
have at once been swallowed;
But now the bold young Hagen
the ways of a daring foeman bravely followed.
He with strength but youthful
the tightened string drew out,
And arrows swift and many
from the well-bent bow he shot.
Alas! he did not hit him;
what hope of his ill-luck turning?
Then he of the sword bethought him;
he heard the maids bewailing him and mourning.
Tho' his years were not yet many,
he still was brave enough;
A wing from the angry griffin
he struck at the shoulder off,
And in the leg he smote him
a heavier blow and stronger;
So that his wounded body
the bird away from the spot could drag no longer.
The boy was now the winner;
one of his foes lay dead;
But quickly came another,
who sorrow for him made.
All at last were slaughtered;
nor old nor young were living;
God in heaven helped him;
but truly against such strength 'twere hopeless striving.
When he that feat of wonder
had done, with heart so brave,
He called the friendly maidens
from out their rocky cave.
He said: "Let air and sunshine
your sorry hearts be filling;

Since now the God in heaven
to grant to us some bliss at last is willing,"
His call they kindly welcomed,
and many times, forsooth,
The boy by the lovely maidens
was kissed upon the mouth.
Their keeper now lay lifeless;
and none there was to hinder
Their roaming o'er the hillsides,
and, far or near, at their good-will to wander.
By help of the boy, from sorrow
they now were wholly free;
The little childish wanderer,
so skilled with the bow was he,
That birds his well-shot arrows
could never shun by flying.
He shot them now for pastime;
but to get them soon for food must he be trying.
He in heart was daring,
he was mild, but also brave;
Hey! from the wild beasts learning,
what nimble leaps he gave!
As doth the strong young panther,
over the rocks he scrambled;
Himself was his only teacher,
and, far away from kin, alone he rambled.
While on the shore, by the waters,
his time he often spent,
He saw, among the sea-waves,
live fishes, as he went;
To catch them it were easy,
but yet he did not get them,
For with fire his kitchen smoked not.
Daily his sorrow grew that he could not eat them.
Oft from his rocky shelter
to the forest he would roam;
Many wild beasts saw he,
strong and grim in their home.
One there was among them
greedy to devour him;
But with his sword he slew him,
and let him quickly feel the hate he bore him.
Unto a wild chameleon
this dreadful thing was like;
Its skin the boy drew from it,
(for that was he not too weak;)
Now for its blood he thirsted,
and, when of this he had taken,
He felt great strength come o'er him;
and many thoughts began in him to waken.
Then with the skin of the monster
he wrapped himself around;
When soon to him it happened
hard by a lion he found.
To shun him it were hopeless,
for he quickly rushed upon him;
But the boy was yet unwounded;
his foe from the daring child warm welcome won him.
When he the lion had smitten
to death, with many blows,
He to the cave would take it,
as homeward thence he goes.
At all times had the maidens
been by his care upholden,
But now this food unwonted
did raise their waning strength, and their hearts embolden.
Of fire they yet knew nothing,
but wood they need not seek;
From out a stone he quickly
many sparks did strike.
The food they long had wanted
he soon was on them bestowing,

And, since there was none to do it,
 themselves the flesh must cook on the coals now glowing.
 When they of food had eaten,
 at once they grew more strong;
 Their boldness, too, grew greater,
 (to God their thanks belong.)
 And now their bodies also
 as healthy were, and comely,
 As if they still were living,
 each in her father-land, on fare more homely.
 The wild young Hagen also
 the strength of twelve did own;
 And for this, thro' all his lifetime,
 praise by him was won.
 But both to him and the maidens
 'twas pain and sorrow only,
 To think that they forever
 must pass their lives in a waste so sad and lonely.
 They begged of him to lead them
 down to the watery flood.
 Shame they felt in going,
 for the clothes were none too good
 The maidens now were wearing;
 they themselves had sewed them,
 Ere yet the youthful Hagen
 them in their banishment found, and his kindness showed them.
 For days full four and twenty
 they fared thro' the piny wood;
 At last, on a morning early,
 down they came to the flood,
 And saw a laden galley,
 that came from Garadé.
 Then did the lonely maidens
 sorrow and pain at the sailors' plight betray.
 Hagen shouted loudly;
 he was hindered none the more,
 Altho' the winds were boisterous,
 and wild the waves did roar.
 Now the ship was groaning;
 and the sailors, landward steering,
 Felt dread of water-nixes,
 on seeing the maids, as they the shore were nearing.
 The ship it had a master,
 a lord from out Salmé;
 Hagen, as well as his kindred,
 had he known on a former day.
 They before were neighbors,
 but Ireland's child, here roaming,
 The youthful son of Sigeband,
 was to the pilgrims unknown, who now were coming.
 The earl forbade his steersman
 nearer to sail to the shore;
 But now the childish outcast
 but begged of them the more,
 For love of God, to take them
 away from that shore forsaken.
 The sailors felt emboldened,
 when by the boy the name of Christ was taken.
 The earl, with eleven others,
 into a boat now sprung;
 Ere he the truth was learning,
 the time to him seemed long.
 Whether the maidens as goblins
 or mermaids must be treated
 He knew not; such beings never,
 in all his life before, his eyes had greeted.
 He first began to ask them,
 before he reached the strand:
 "Boy, have you been baptized?
 What do you in this land?"
 Dight with fresh green mosses
 he saw those lovely daughters,

Who earnestly begged the sailors
 that they would deign to take them o'er the waters.

Tale the Third. HOW HAGEN SAILED TO HIS HOME.

Ere they went on shipboard,
 the pilgrims them besought
 Kindly to take the clothing
 they with them had brought.
 However shy were the maidens,
 to wear them they were ready;
 They donned the clothes with blushes,
 and now their sorrow had an ending speedy.
 Soon as the lovely maidens
 embarked upon the wave,
 They heartily were greeted
 by knights both good and brave,
 Who to the high-born daughters
 welcome to give were heedful;
 Tho' they at first mistook them,
 and thought them wicked elves, or mermaids dreadful.
 That night the maidens rested
 with friends upon the sea;
 So wondrous was their dwelling,
 from fear they were not free:
 Wiser it were in the children
 to think this home a blessing.
 Soon as the earl had bidden,
 their food upon the maids they all were pressing.
 After they had eaten,
 and while with them he sat,
 The lord of the land of Garadie
 the maidens did entreat
 To say by whom such fair ones
 were brought unto that shore.
 The children, at his asking,
 only felt their sorrow grow the more.
 First answered him the eldest
 of those who with him sat:
 "I come from a far-off kingdom,
 (my lord, now hear my fate;)
 I was born in the land of India,
 a land wherein my father
 Was king while he was living,
 but I, alas! the crown must leave to another."
 Then spake the maid next younger:
 "I too have come from far;
 Erewhile a strong old griffin
 did me from Portugal bear.
 A king in the land was my father;
 none than he was prouder,
 Nor for a mighty ruler,
 far or near, were ever praises louder."
 Then the youngest maiden,
 who by the earl sat near,
 To him spoke low and modestly,
 and said: "I pray you hear;
 From Iserland I was carried,
 my father there held power;
 But from those who hoped to rear me,
 alas! afar was I borne in an evil hour."
 The high-born knight then answered:
 "By God 'tis ordered well,
 Since you among your kinsfolk
 not long were left to dwell;
 Now, at last, by his kindness
 you are freed from dangers,
 For I within these borders
 have found you living here, such lovely strangers."
 However much he asked them,
 they yet to tell were loath,

How unto them it happened
grim death had spared them both,
When erewhiles the griffin
unto his nest had brought them.
Many had been their sorrows;
no more to speak of these the maids bethought them.
Then said the worthy leader,
turning to the youth;
“My dearest friend and fellow,
now let me hear the truth;
Since unto me these maidens
their sorry tale have given,
From you would I hear gladly,
and learn the land and kin whence you were riven.”
To him wild Hagen answered:
“That will I tell to you;
One of those dreadful griffins
bore me hither too.
Sigeband was my father;
in Ireland once was I living;
But long with these lovely maidens
I since have dwelt, with many sorrows striving.”
Then they all besought him
to say how it befell
That, living with the griffins
he had come off so well.
To them young Hagen answered:
“To God it all was owing;
But now I have cooled my anger;
no more for them my heart with hate is glowing.”
Then spake the lord of Garadie:
“I fain would learn from you
How you were freed from danger?”
He said: “I quickly slew
Both the old and the young ones;
not one of those is living
By whom my life was threatened,
and who to me such fear were daily giving.”
Then said all the sailors:
“Your strength indeed was great;
For every man and woman
to praise you it were meet.
A thousand of us truly
'gainst them in, vain had striven,
Nor ever could have slain them;
truly to you have blessings great been given.”
The earl and all his followers
were of the boy afraid;
His strength was past all measure,
and sorrow for them made.
They would by craft his weapons
have taken from him gladly,
But these he sternly guarded,
and soon, thro' him, it ended for them sadly.
Then spake the earl yet further:
“It now has happened well,
After our toilsome wanderings,
and all that us befell.
But since you are a kinsman
of my foeman, Sigeband,
And here have come from Ireland,
I as a hostage hold you in my hand.
“You come to me most fitly,
as you shall know ere long,
For many of your kindred
have done to me great wrong.
In Garadie's fair kingdom,
which lies too near their border,
In a heavy fight, my warriors
were seized upon and murdered by their shameful order.”
Then answered him young Hagen:
“Of all the wrongs they did

I am wholly guiltless;
if me to them you lead
I their hearts will soften,
and so will the strife be ended.
Let hope to me be granted
that I on my kinsmen's shore may soon be landed.”
Then said the earl to Hagen:
“For a pledge must you abide,
And I shall keep these maidens
to live at court by my side;
They will swell my greatness,
and I shall be their owner.”
Then thought the youthful Hagen,
such words to be to him a wrong and a dishonor.
He quickly said in anger:
“No bondsman will I be;
That may no man ask for,
who would unscathed go free.
And now, my worthy sailors,
you needs to my land must bear me;
I will reward you gladly,
and to give you clothes and gold will never spare me.
“The earl has thought my maidens
his own shall ever be;
But they shall yet be happy,
and shall of him be free.
Whoe'er is blest with wisdom,
let him my bidding follow;
Look to your sails, and turn them,
and guide the ship to Ireland, o'er the billow.”
The men, as the earl had bidden,
to seize the boy now dared,
But boldly did he meet them,
and for their lives they feared.
He by the hair caught thirty,
and into the water flung them;
Soon the strength of his body
was known to all, and dreaded much among them.
Had not the kindly maidens
sought to end the fight,
Soon the earl of Garadie
he would have killed outright.
'Gainst neither low nor mighty
did his anger falter;
These warriors and sailors
now to Ireland's shores their way must alter.
They began at once to hasten,
lest he their lives might take;
For now the wrath of Hagen
made them with fear to quake.
For seventeen days the sailors
from toiling never rested,
And sorely were they frightened;
whene'er he seemed unkind they ills forecasted.
When he now drew nearer
unto his father's shore,
He saw the roomy castles
he well had known before;
Soon a lofty palace
he spied at the edge of the river;
Three hundred towers fully
he there beheld, as strong and good as ever.
In it dwelt King Sigeband,
with his proud and queenly wife.
Again each pilgrim sailor
thought to lose his life;
For should the lord of Ireland
aught of them be learning,
They feared that he would slay them;
but Hagen stood between, his anger turning.
Then spake unto the pilgrims
that brave and warlike man:

"Your peace will I make gladly,
 altho' I do not reign;
 I hold no sway in the kingdom,
 but thither will I be sending,
 And 'twixt yourself and my father
 of the hatred old I soon will make an ending.
 "Would any now be doing
 what wealth to him will bring,
 Let him my errand carry.
 Whoever to the king
 Shall say what I shall bid him,
 gold will I give him truly;
 And also, very gladly,
 my father and my mother will reward him duly."
 Twelve of the stranded pilgrims
 he bade to ride away:
 "Now ask of the king, my father,"
 thus the youth did say,
 "Whether to see young Hagen,
 his son, he still is yearning,—
 Him who erst by the griffin
 was stolen far away, heart-sorrow learning.
 "I know that what you tell him
 the king will not believe;
 Then ask you of my mother
 if she her faith will give,
 And if for her child to own me
 she will at last be willing,
 If I upon my bosom
 will show a golden cross, the proof fulfilling."
 When those he sent had ridden
 farther into the land,
 They found, in the palace seated,
 Queen U-te and Sigeband.
 Then knew the king that the riders
 from Garadie came thither,
 And that they to him were foemen;
 at this both he and his men were wroth together.
 He asked of them how dared they
 to come within his land?
 Then one among them answered:
 "We are sent here at the hand
 Of your son, the youthful Hagen.
 If any fain would meet him,
 He now is here, so near you,
 that you ere many hours, in truth, may greet him."
 Then spake the kingly Sigeband:
 "To cheat there is no need;
 The loss of my dear little one,
 who hath so long been dead,
 Still my heart's deep sorrow
 doth too oft awaken."
 "Ask, then, the queen, your lady,
 if for a falsehood should our word be taken?
 "The little boy so often
 in her fond care has been,
 She knows if on his bosom
 a golden cross was seen.
 And if upon this wanderer
 be found the self-same token,
 You as your child can own him;
 you then will grant that truth by us is spoken."
 Then to the Lady U-te
 the tale was quickly told;
 Glad was she of the tidings,
 yet mourned she as of old.
 She said: "Now let us hasten,
 that the truth no more be hidden."
 Her lord then bade to saddle;
 and steeds for himself and his bravest knights were bidden.
 Straightway one of the pilgrims
 to the fair Queen U-te said:

"I will tell you, if you listen,
 what now to do you need.
 You first must carry clothing
 for each young lovely maiden
 Whose coming does you honor;
 as followers of your son were they hither bidden."
 Soon brought they richest clothing,
 and tiring-women, too;
 The queen was also followed
 by men both brave and true.
 They found the youthful Hagen,
 who on the shore was standing;
 And many men from Garadie,
 who with the wandering boy on the beach were landing.

Tale the Fourth. HOW HAGEN WAS MET BY HIS FATHER AND MOTHER.

Soon both men and women
 riding there were seen;
 Then the brave young Hagen
 went forth to meet his kin.
 Who 'twas that came to greet him
 he now to know was seeking;
 The throng grew ever thicker
 of friends who came in haste, their kindness speaking.
 The king a friendly welcome
 into his land soon gave;
 He said: "To send men hither
 did you the boldness have,
 To say that our queen beloved
 is in truth your mother?
 If the words are true you've spoken,
 so glad as now I am there's not another."
 His queen, the lovely U-te,
 with lofty breeding, said:
 "Bid that for these new-comers
 lodgings now be made;
 I shall know right easily
 if he for the crown is fitted."
 She found, in truth, the token,
 and, full of bliss, her youthful son she greeted.
 With eyes all wet with weeping,
 she kissed him on the mouth:
 "Though I before was ailing,
 I now am well in sooth.
 Welcome be thou, my Hagen,
 my only child, loved dearly!
 All in the land of Sigeband
 right glad shall be for him they lost so early."
 The king to the youth came nearer;
 his happiness was great.
 For the hearty love he bore him
 his manly cheek was wet;
 With tears that hot had risen
 his eyes were overflowing.
 For the child, from him erst stolen,
 rightly the father felt the love he was showing.
 The queenly U-te welcomed
 the homeless maids that day;
 Many clothes she gave them,
 both bright in hue and gray,
 Of silk, with downy linings,
 that much the maidens wanted.
 Their sorrows now were lightened
 by all the gifts the wife of Sigeband granted.
 Well they clothed the maidens,
 as their loveliness became;
 This they long had needed,
 and oft had blushed with shame;
 But, decked with gaudy trimmings,
 now they came less shyly.

The king and all his followers
 soon to the maidens gave a welcome freely.
 Hagen asked that friendship
 to the men of Garadie
 Should by the king and his lieges
 be granted speedily;
 Beseeching his forgiveness
 for all their foul misdoing.
 Soon, at the wish of Hagen,
 kindness to the pilgrims he was showing.
 When the king had kissed them
 and soothed his angry mood,
 He to the shipwrecked pilgrims
 made their losses good.
 To them it was a blessing,
 and praise to Hagen carried;
 The lands of the men of Ireland
 never since have they as foemen harried.
 Then their food and clothing
 the guests took out, for use,
 And up on the sands they bore them,
 trusting in Hagen's truce;
 To take their rest for a fortnight
 them did he embolden.
 The band of haughty pilgrims
 to give to him their thanks were now beholden.
 Then, in the midst of uproar,
 they rode away from the shore;
 Up the castle of Ballian
 came also many more,
 Led by a tale of wonder
 that the son of the king was living,—
 Of their king so rich and mighty;
 a thing so strange was to many past believing.
 The water-weary pilgrims,
 long-tossed upon the sea,
 When fourteen days were ended
 to leave the land were free.
 To them by the host were given
 gifts of gold, bright shining;
 By the help of his son's great kindness
 he hoped a lasting friendship to be winning.
 Hagen his maidens never
 henceforth unthought-of leaves;
 Kindly doth he teach them
 oft-times to bathe in the waves.
 He showed himself most loving,
 ever for them caring;
 Rich clothes to them were given,
 and wise beyond his years was all his bearing.
 Now was the youth beginning
 to be a man well-grown.
 He ever showed his kinsmen
 the skill to warriors known;
 Whate'er a knight befitteth
 with hand and weapon doing.
 In the land of his father, Sigeband,
 his mighty sway he soon to all was showing.
 Hagen was ever learning
 what doth a king beseem.
 He who of knights is leader
 must ever free from shame
 And every stain be living;
 this earns fair women's praises.
 So gentle was he truly
 that every one with wonder on him gazes.
 Brave he was and daring,
 (such is the olden song.)
 And ever was he ready
 to right his neighbor's wrong.
 He high upheld his honor
 in all things, never fearing;

Throughout the land, his praises
 were spoken and were sung in all men's hearing.
 In a waste he grew to manhood,
 that youthful son of a king,
 Wild beasts his only fellows;
 but none so quick could spring
 That they to flee were able,
 if he for them was striving.
 I ween both he and his maidens
 had wonders seen, while by the waters living.
 Rightly his name was Hagen;
 but later men did own
 He was "of kings the Devil;"
 so came he to be known
 In every land and kingdom,
 such was his strength in fighting.
 The bold and wild young Hagen
 well did earn his name, his foemen smiting.
 He oft was begged by his kinsmen
 that he a wife would take;
 One so fair was near him
 that none had need to seek
 A fairer or a lovelier,
 all earthly kingdoms over.
 He himself had taught her;
 with her in sorrow grown, and now her lover.
 She bore the name of Hilda;
 from India she had come,
 And love she oft had shown him
 under their wretched doom,
 Since, in their early childhood,
 he in the cave had found her.
 None better need he wish for,
 or seek in any land the heavens under.
 His father bade him hasten
 to be knighted with the sword,
 With a hundred of his vassals.
 He gave, with kindly word,
 To him and to his maidens,
 for clothes and horses needed,
 A thousand marks of silver.
 Hagen said that the will of his father should be heeded.
 The news of this was bruited
 through many a prince's land;
 And the day when it should happen
 all did understand.
 Soon the king's great kindness
 from all won praises golden
 In a year and three days after
 the festival of knighting them was holden.
 For this the knights made busy,
 glad to be bidden there.
 Soon they made them bucklers,
 bright and painted fair;
 In making showy saddles
 the workmen were not idle;
 With gold both red and shining
 the breastplate was bedecked, as was the bridle.
 Upon a broad green meadow
 the guests of the mighty king
 Were bidden then to gather.
 He left not anything
 That they from him could ask for;
 seats were spread in order,
 And many guests soon after
 were seen to ride to his land from every border.
 To those from far now ready
 the sword with him to bear
 Fighting-gear was given,
 that beseemed them well to wear.
 They who from other kingdoms
 into his land were faring

A thousand men were reckoned;
 to give them clothes and steeds he was not sparing.
 Unto his friends then said he:
 "If now you deem it fit
 That men a king should call me,
 it therefore seemeth meet
 That she my heart holds dearest
 a crown with me be wearing;
 Never shall I rest happy
 until, for her love to me, she this is sharing."
 Then asked of him his followers
 who might the lady be,
 Who, riding proudly before them,
 they at court should see?
 He said: "Her name is Hilda,
 in India once living;
 To me and to my kindred
 she, as our queen, no shame will e'er be giving."
 Well pleased was now his mother,
 when she the tidings had,
 That they thought to crown the lady;
 his father, too was glad.
 Of them was she so worthy,
 that high in heart they set her.
 With him the sword was taken
 by full six hundred; the number e'en was greater.
 As is the way of Christians,
 both of them were bid
 First for the crown to be hallowed;
 this at once they did.
 King Hagen with Queen Hilda
 in state were soon seen riding;
 Many games of knighthood
 were played at court by his men, at Hagen's bidding.
 Sigeband, too, rode with them;
 high rose his heart as he went;
 He reckoned very little
 the wealth that must be spent.
 When in jousts they had ridden,
 in ways most true and knightly,
 Then were pages busy
 to make the halls for the guests all fair and sightly.
 Seats were brought together,
 strong, and broad, and long,
 With stools besides, and tables.
 After the mass was sung,
 U-te, his wife, came riding,
 with women round her thronging;
 These the youthful warriors
 to gaze on, as they rode, right earnestly were longing.
 While the great King Sigeband
 sat by U-te's side,
 And Hagen next to Hilda,
 all looked on with pride;
 And said, in his child-belovéd
 happy was their master.
 Before them, while at table,
 the throng was great; the clash of spears grew faster.
 After the king of Ireland
 at the meal his fill had eat,
 By riders the grass was trodden;
 flowers to dust they beat
 With rude and heavy trampling,
 while in uproar riding.
 The men best known for bravery,
 before the fair, in knightly jousts were leading.
 Four and twenty warriors,
 bearing well the shield,
 Over the plain came riding;
 bold were they in the field,
 And now in many a struggle
 all their strength were spending.

'Twas done in sight of the ladies,
 and hard it was of their games to make an ending.
 The brave young son of Sigeband
 himself in the onset rode.
 Not loth was she to gaze on him
 who her with hope had wooed;
 That she to him was friendly
 in a far-off land forsaken,
 For this would he reward her.
 No truer knight the sword had ever taken.
 Amid the throngs here riding,
 one thro' the dust might see
 Men whose birth was princely,
 in number twelve and three;
 The Christian and the heathen
 to him their fiefs were owing,
 And honor now, right heartily,
 to Sigeband and Hagen they were showing.
 Long those high times lasted;
 their mirth, how loud it rose!
 With crowding and with shouting
 great the bustle grows.
 The king now bade the champions
 to end the strife so heated;
 And leave to them was given
 that they beside the ladies should be seated.
 Before his friends and kinsmen
 then spake King Sigeband:
 "Unto my dear son Hagen
 give I now my land,
 With the dwellers and the strongholds,
 be they far or nearer.
 Let all my trusty liegemen
 have him now for their lord, and hold none dearer."
 As soon as his father, Sigeband,
 his sway did thus forego,
 Hagen his lands and castles
 began in fief to bestow;
 This he did right freely,
 and to those to whom he gave them
 He seemed so true and worthy
 that they indeed from him would gladly have them.
 As by feudal law is rightful,
 many stretched the hand
 To the youthful king in fealty.
 To all, from every land,
 Or far or near, then gave he
 clothes and riches hoarded.
 A feast so freely given
 would now the poor not harm, and with thanks be rewarded.
 At court now dwelt the maidens
 who had before been brought
 With him within those borders;
 of these one now was sought,
 And sent to the king and Hilda;
 there she soon was dwelling.
 The maid it was from Iserland;
 of one more fair to see none e'er was telling.
 A princely youth soon wooed her,
 who saw the maiden fair
 Beside the king's fair daughter.
 Soothly might he swear
 That she by right was worthy
 to be of a crown the wearer.
 She had erst been Hilda's playmate;
 of widespread lands she now became the sharer.
 At last the guests were scattered,
 and all now left the king.
 That high-born lady also
 men did straightway bring
 Into the land of Norway,
 to her youthful lord's kind keeping.

After her heavy sorrows,
 blest with hope, she knew no more of weeping.
 Now, throughout all Ireland,
 did Hagen his sway begin.
 If ever among his lieges
 a deed of wrong was seen,
 At once for this the doer
 must pay with pain well dreaded;
 Of such, within a twelvemonth,
 eighty or more were for evil deeds beheaded.
 An inroad made he later
 into the lands of his foes.
 He spared the poor, and brought not
 flames, to add to their woes;
 But if with pride and rudeness
 he was by any treated,
 He quick laid waste their strongholds,
 and deadly wounds in bitter wrath he meted.
 When it came to fighting,
 he was a goodly knight.
 Of heroes high in breeding
 he soon brought low the might;
 To all he showed his bravery,
 whether far or near him.
 Of kings was he the Devil;
 in truth his many foes might greatly fear him.
 The life he led was happy,
 nor of gladness asked he more.
 His wife, from far-off India,
 to her lord and master bore
 A fair and lovely daughter;
 she also, like her mother,
 Bore the name of Hilda;
 well known is her tale to us, and to many another.
 Wild Hagen bade his maidens
 so to rear the child,
 That the sun ne'er shone upon her;
 nor were rough winds wild
 Oft allowed to touch her.
 She was by ladies guarded,
 And cared for by her kinsmen;
 most wisely was the trust to them awarded.
 Before twelve years were ended
 the fair and well-born maid
 Was comely more than any,
 and her name was widely spread;
 Rich and high-born princes
 gladly would have sought her,
 And earnestly were thinking
 how they could win wild Hagen's lovely daughter.
 One of these same princes
 in Denmark had his home,
 Within the land of Wales.
 When the tale to him had come
 About this lovely maiden,
 his longing ne'er would leave him;
 But he was scorned by Hagen,
 who swore of life and name he would bereave him.
 Whene'er to seek the maiden
 men were by wooers sent,
 In his pride, wild Hagen
 upon their death was bent.
 He to none would give her
 who than himself was weaker;
 Of the tale of the mighty Hagen,
 far and near, was every man the speaker.
 He bade that more than twenty
 of those sent there be hung;
 None might wreak his anger,
 though sore his heart was wrung.
 When all had done their errand,
 for Hagen's daughter suing,

"Enough," soon went the saying:
 "Twere best that none should go for her a-wooing."
 But still by high-born warriors
 the maid was not unsought.
 Let pride be ne'er so lofty,
 as we have long been taught,
 There always is another
 with just as high a bearing;
 While to win her kindness
 his yearning grows, and his toil he is never sparing.

Tale the Fifth. HOW WÂ-TE WAS SENT TO IRELAND AS A SUITOR.

Hettel was lord in Daneland;
 to be its king he rose;
 'Twas in the Sturmisch marches,
 as many a one well knows;
 There abode his kindred,
 who ways of honor taught him.
 Ortland also served him.
 His might and worth high fame with all soon brought him.
 One among his kinsfolk
 the name of Wâ-te bore;
 He for his lands and castles
 fealty to Hettel swore.
 As kinsman of his master,
 he careful teaching gave him
 In all things good and worthy,
 and in his watchful care did ever have him.
 A landed knight in Daneland
 was Wâ-te's sister's son,
 The brave and upright Horant.
 Later his faith was shown
 Unto his lord, King Hettel,
 who for his worth did crown him.
 This to him he grudged not,
 but ever for a prince was glad to own him.
 Hettel, rich and mighty,
 at Hegeling held his seat,
 Not far from the lord of Ortland;
 this is true, I weet.
 He there owned many castles,
 eighty at least or over;
 They who these strongholds guarded
 in truest faith and honor held them ever.
 Lord he was of Friesland,
 its waters and its land;
 Ditmarsh, as well as Wales,
 were swayed by his kingly hand.
 Hettel was truly mighty;
 his kinsmen they were many;
 Bold was he and daring,
 and 'gainst his foes he plotted, well as any.
 Hettel was an orphan,
 and so he felt the need
 That he a wife should find him.
 To him, at last, were dead
 Father as well as mother,
 who their lands had left him.
 He friends in truth had many,
 yet found he much in life that of bliss bereft him.
 The best of these besought him
 some maiden's love to seek,
 Who of his birth was worthy.
 The knight did answer make:
 "I here know none who fitly
 should be o'er the Hegelings seated,
 Nor is there any lady
 who, brought from far, should as my queen be greeted."
 Then spake a knight of Nifland,
 Morunc, a youthful lord:

"I know of a lovely maiden,
 of whom I oft have heard;
 She in truth is fairer
 than all on earth now living.
 Her will we gladly sue for,
 that she her troth to you may soon be giving."
 Then quoth the king: "Who is she?
 her name I pray you tell."
 Then said Morunc: "'Tis Hilda,
 in Ireland she doth dwell;
 Her father's name is Hagen;
 King Ger was her forefather.
 If to this land she cometh,
 your life will then be blissful altogether."
 Then spake the young King Hettel:
 "I oft have heard it said,
 Whoever woos this maiden
 her father's wrath must dread.
 Many a worthy suitor
 his life for her has ended;
 But none among my vassals
 must meet his death for having me befriended."
 Morunc quickly answered:
 "Then send to Horant's land,
 And bid that he come hither;
 he well doth understand
 The ways and moods of Hagen,
 for often has he seen them.
 Unless his help he gives you,
 'twill come to nought, howe'er your friends demean them."
 He said: "Your will I follow,
 since she is so fair;
 But if my friends shall seek her,
 yourself the suit must share;
 And if unto your friendship
 the task I've trusted fitly,
 Wealth shall you have and honor,
 when as the Hegeling's queen she's greeted rightly."
 He quickly sent out riders
 through the Danish land to haste;
 By them was the mighty Horant,
 his nephew, found at last,
 And to the court was bidden;
 to come must he be speedy,
 Within seven days, not later,
 if he to help his lord in truth were ready.
 When Horant met the heralds,
 and did their errand hear,
 Then for friendly service
 himself he would not spare.
 Right gladly did he listen
 to the bidding of his master;
 But this, on a day thereafter,
 to him brought sorrow great, and sore disaster.
 To the court he soon went riding,
 with sixty of his men;
 Of friends at home young Horant
 to take his leave was seen.
 He then made haste the faster,
 when now the tale was told him
 How he must help his master,
 if for a faithful knight he now would hold him.
 Upon the seventh morning
 he came to Hettel's land;
 Decked in finest clothing
 was he and all his band.
 The king to welcome Horant
 rode forth, most glad to greet him,
 And saw that with him Fru-te,
 another Danish knight, was there to meet him.
 Good news it was of their coming,
 of which all men now spoke;

Glad was the king to see them;
 from him a share it took
 Of the deep and heavy sorrow
 which his heart was filling.
 "Welcome, Cousin Fru-te!"
 cried he, the while he looked upon him smiling.
 When Horant now with Fru-te
 before the king did stand,
 Then he asked for tidings
 of their home in the Danish land.
 Both of them now answered:
 "Not many days are ended
 Since we in stormy battle
 with many deadly blows our lives defended."
 He asked whence they had ridden
 from off the stormy field.
 They said: "It was from Portugal,
 where the strife was held;
 There the mighty ruler
 from fighting would not spare us;
 Daily within our borders
 he did us wrong, and much ill-will did bear us."
 The young King Hettel answered:
 "Now cast all care away;
 I know that the aged Wã-te
 will never yield the sway
 He holds o'er the Sturmisch marches;
 he of the land is owner;
 Who wins from him a castle
 will earn high praise and long be held in honor."
 Within the roomy palace
 the guests then took their seats.
 Both Horant and Sir Fru-te
 with thoughtless, merry wits,
 Of the loves of high-born ladies
 began to gossip gaily.
 To them the young king listened,
 and costly gifts he gave unto them freely.
 Hettel turned to Horant,
 and thus to ask began:
 "If aught hath reached your hearing,
 then tell me, if you can,
 How 'tis with Lady Hilda,
 King Hagen's lovely daughter?
 To her would I send most gladly,
 and would that words of love from me were brought her."
 The youthful knight then answered:
 "She is to me well known;
 A maid so fair and lovely
 my eyes ne'er looked upon
 As she, that maid of Ireland,
 Hilda, the rich and stately,
 The daughter of wild Hagen;
 to wear a crown with you would befit her greatly."
 On this King Hettel asked him:
 "Now think you, can it be
 That ever her lordly father
 will give this maid to me?
 If I deemed he were so friendly,
 I would seek to win her,
 And would reward him ever
 who gave to me his ready help to gain her."
 "That can never happen,"
 to him young Horant said:
 "No rider with this errand
 to Hagen need be sped.
 To hasten thither boldly
 I feel, myself, no longing;
 The man sent there to seek her
 is either slain with blows, or dies by hanging."
 Then spake again King Hettel:
 "Not so for her I care;

To hang my trusty vassal
 should Hagen ever dare,
 Then he, the king of Ireland,
 himself must death be facing.
 Be he ne'er so boastful,
 he'll find his rashness is to him no blessing."
 Then spake the knightly Fru-te:
 "If Wâ-te deigns to go
 Unto the king of Ireland,
 to woo this maid for you,
 Lucky will be our errand,
 and we shall bring the lady;
 Or wounds throughout our bodies,
 e'en to the heart, to take shall we be ready."
 Then said to him King Hettel:
 "My men I now will send
 With word to the lord of Sturmland;
 I do not fear the end,
 For Wâ-te will hasten gladly
 wherever I shall bid him.
 Bring Irold, too, from Friesland,
 with all his men, for sorely do I need him."
 His riders then went quickly
 into the Sturmisch land,
 Where the brave old Wâ-te
 they found among his band.
 Then the word they gave him,
 now to the king to betake him;
 But Wâ-te felt great wonder,
 to know for what the Hegeling king did seek him.
 He asked if it were needful
 to bring, when he should go,
 His breastplate and his helmet,
 and any followers, too?
 One of the heralds answered:
 "We did not hear it spoken
 That he had need of fighters;
 for you alone did his words a wish betoken."
 Wâ-te would be going,
 but left behind a guard,
 To care for lands and castles.
 Then taking horse, at his word,
 Twelve of his followers only
 with him from home now started;
 Wâ-te, the brave old warrior,
 at once on his way to court in haste departed.
 He reached the land of the Hegelings.
 When he now was seen,
 As he came near Kampatille,
 but little sorrow, I ween,
 Was felt by the kingly Hettel;
 with speed he went to greet him,
 And thought of the kindly welcome
 he would give his friend, old Wâ-te, when he met him.
 Right glad was he to see him;
 with hearty speech he says:
 "Sir Wâ-te, thou art welcome;
 many are the days
 Since I have looked upon you,
 when on our horses sitting,
 Side by side together,
 we proudly met our foes with blows befitting."
 Then answered him old Wâ-te:
 "Ever should good friends
 Be glad to be together;
 that fight the better ends
 Where, before the foeman,
 friends as one are fighting."
 Then by the hand he held him,
 to him his love and friendship warmly plighting.
 They took their seats together,
 nor place to other gave.

Hettel, he was mighty,
 and Wâ-te, he was brave;
 He yet was also haughty,
 and proud in all his bearing.
 Hettel now was thinking
 how Wâ-te could be brought to Ireland to be faring.
 Then spake the knightly Hettel:
 "For this I bade thee come;
 Need have I of riders,
 to send to Hagen's home.
 Truly I know of no one
 whom I would send the sooner
 Than thee, my good friend Wâ-te,
 or who in this could bring me greater honor."
 Then said the aged Wâ-te:
 "Whatever I can do
 To show my love and fealty,
 I'll gladly do for you.
 Herein I may be trusted,
 to be for you bold-hearted;
 And to bring about your wishes,
 unless in this by death I should be thwarted."
 Then quoth the kingly Hettel:
 "Many friends have said
 That if the mighty Hagen
 will my wooing heed,
 And give to me his daughter,
 she, as my queen, would honor
 Me and my kingdom also;
 my heart is bent as a wife and queen to own her."
 Angrily spoke Wâ-te:
 "Whoever this has said
 Would truly feel no sorrow
 if I this day were dead.
 'Tis Fru-te, he of Denmark,
 I know it is no other,
 Who to this has stirred you,
 to send me to the maid, your suit to further.
 "This young and lovely maiden
 is guarded now with care;
 Horant and Fru-te also,
 who say she is so fair,
 And speak to you her praises,
 must go with me to seek her.
 Never shall I rest easy
 unless they strive with me your own to make her."
 Both these faithful vassals
 King Hettel sent for soon;
 To others good and trusty
 they also made it known,
 That by their king and master
 they at court were wanted.
 No more their thoughts men whispered,
 but freely spoke of the coming raid, undaunted.
 When Wâ-te, the brave old warrior,
 did on Horant look,
 And on the Danish Fru-te,
 how sharply then he spoke!
 "Brave knights, may God reward you,
 to me you are so friendly,
 And of my fame so careful,
 and my trip to court this time you help so kindly.
 "You are, forsooth, most willing
 that I this errand do;
 But both of you are bounden
 with me thereon to go,
 To serve the king, our master,
 even as our duty calleth.
 He who my life endangers
 himself the risk must share, whate'er befalleth."
 "For this I now am ready,"
 answered Horant the Dane;

"If leave the king will grant us,
 I then will shun no pain,
 Nor aught of toil will grudge me.
 Only to see this lady,
 For me and for my kinsman,
 were happiness enough, and bliss already."
 "Then we ought," said Fru-te,
 "to take upon our way
 Seven hundred warriors.
 No man doth honor pay
 To Hagen without grudging.
 He is overweening, truly;
 If he thinks that he can crush us,
 he soon must lay aside his boasting wholly.
 "Sir king, you should bid your workmen
 a ship of cypress-wood
 To build upon the river;
 strong must it be and good,
 So your band of warriors
 shall shipwreck ne'er be ruing.
 From timber white as silver
 the lofty masts your men must soon be hewing.
 'Also food for your fighters
 you must now bespeak;
 And bid that men be busy
 helmets for us to make,
 And hauberks strong for many;
 when we these are wearing,
 Then wild Hagen's daughter
 we shall the easier win by craft and daring.
 "Also my nephew Horant,
 who is shrewd and wise,
 Must go with us as a shopman;
 (I grudge him not his guise)
 There must he to the ladies
 be clasps and arm-bands selling,
 With gold and costly jewels;
 thus greater trust in us will they be feeling.
 "For sale we also must carry
 weapons and clothing, too;
 And since wild Hagen's daughter
 it is such risk to woo,
 That only now by fighting
 one can hope to wed her,
 Let Wâ-te choose the warriors
 to go with him, and home to the king to lead her."
 Then spake the aged Wâ-te:
 "A shop I cannot keep;
 Not often doth my money
 in coffers idly sleep;
 My lot I've shared with fighters,
 and that I still am doing;
 Therein I am not skilful,
 that I to ladies gew-gaws should be showing.
 "But since my nephew Horant
 on me this task has laid,
 He knows full well that Hagen
 will never yield the maid:
 He prides himself on owning
 the strength of six and twenty;
 If he shall learn of our wooing,
 our hope to leave his land will be but scanty.
 "Good king, now let us hasten,
 but bid that first our hull
 With a deck of deal be covered;
 let it, below, be full
 Of knights both strong and doughty,
 who shall help be giving,
 If ever the wild King Hagen
 forbids that we shall leave his kingdom, living.
 "Of these brave knights a hundred,
 with outfits good for war,

Unto the land of Ireland
 we in our ships must bear;
 There shall my nephew Horant
 in his shop be seated,
 Keeping two hundred near him;
 thus shall the ladies' coming be awaited.
 "Your men must also build us
 barges strong and wide,
 To carry food and horses,
 and to sail our ships beside:
 Enough for a year or longer
 we must take to feed us;
 And we will say to Hagen
 that to leave our land King Hettel did forbid us,
 "And that our lord and master
 great wrong to us hath wrought.
 Then with our gifts so costly
 we often shall be brought
 To Hagen and to Hilda,
 where they their court are keeping;
 Our gifts shall make us welcome,
 and kindness from the king shall we be reaping.
 "We then the tale will tell him,
 we wretched outlaws are;
 And thus at once the pity
 of Hagen we shall share.
 To us, poor homeless wanderers,
 shelter will be granted,
 And in his land King Hagen
 thenceforth will see that nought by us is wanted."
 Hettel asked his warriors:
 "My friends, I pray you tell,
 Since you to go are willing,
 how soon you hence will sail?"
 "So soon as comes the summer,
 and May with gladsome weather,"
 They said, "we shall be ready,
 and, riding again to court, will we come hither.
 "Meanwhile must men be making
 whatever we shall need,—
 Sails and also rudders,
 well-made, and that with speed,
 Barges wide, and galleys,
 to bear us to our haven;
 So the swell of the waters
 shall stir us not, nor make us sick or craven."
 King Hettel said: "Ride quickly,
 now, to your land and home.
 For horses and for clothing
 no cost to you shall come;
 For you and all your followers
 such outfit shall be ready,
 That you no shame shall suffer,
 whenever you are seen by any lady."
 When he his leave had taken,
 Wâ-te to Sturm-land rode;
 Horant and with him Fru-te
 followed in hurried mood,
 Back to the land of Denmark,
 where they held the lordship.
 To help their master Hettel
 they thought could never be to them a hardship.
 Then, in his home, King Hettel
 let his will be known;
 Of shipwrights and of workmen
 idle was not one.
 While the ships were building
 to do their best they hastened;
 The beams that met together,
 were with bands of silver strongly fastened.
 All the spars and mast-trees,
 they were strong and good;

Red gold, and brightly shining,
 was laid on the rudder-wood,
 And like to fire was glowing:
 wealth their master blesses.
 When time it was for leaving,
 the men their tasks had done, and won high praises.
 The ropes that held the anchors
 came from a far-off strand,
 Brought from the shores of Araby;
 never on sea or land,
 Before that day or after,
 had any man seen better:
 So might the men of the Hegelings
 easier make their way o'er the deep sea-water.
 They who the sails were making
 worked late, and early rose;
 For the king had bid them hurry.
 For making these they chose
 Silken stuff from Abalie,
 as good as could be brought them.
 Truly far from idle
 were, in those days, the busy hands that wrought them.
 Can any one believe it?
 They had the anchors made
 Of purest beaten silver.
 The heart of the king was led
 Strongly now to wooing;
 no rest would he be knowing,
 Nor of his men was sparing,
 until the day when they should thence be going.
 Well-framed, with heavy planking,
 now the ships were seen,
 Sound 'gainst war and weather.
 Then word was sent to the men,
 That to seek the lovely lady
 they must soon be faring.
 This was told to no one
 but those who the trust of the king were rightly sharing.
 Wâ-te to meet King Hettel
 from Sturm-land held his course;
 With silver gear and housing,
 heavily went his horse.
 To court went, too, his followers,
 four hundred men undaunted;
 And now the doughty Hettel
 brave knights enough, for guests, no longer wanted.
 Morunc, the brave and daring,
 from Friesland thither went,
 And with him brought two hundred.
 Word to the king was sent
 That now, with helms and breastplates,
 they were thither riding;
 In haste came Irold also;
 thus gladly Hettel's kinsmen did his bidding.
 Thither rode from Denmark
 Horant young and brave;
 Hettel to do his errand
 did trusty liegemen have;
 A thousand men or over
 might he for this be sending;
 Only a prince so mighty
 of such a task had ever made an ending.
 Irold, too, of Or-land,
 was ready now to go:
 E'en though on him King Hettel
 should never clothes bestow,
 Yet, for himself and his followers,
 he had of these so many,
 That wheresoe'er they were going,
 they never need to beg for aught from any.
 The king, as well beseeemed him,
 greeted all the band;

First, his liegeman Irold
 he kindly took by the hand;
 Then he turned to Wâ-te,
 to where he found him seated:
 At last, his hardy warriors,
 ready to leave the land, his word awaited.
 To all it now was bidden
 that they should give good heed,
 And everything make ready
 that knights could ever need.
 Now were seen by the warriors
 the ships so fair and stately;
 To woo the lovely Hilda
 the king in all things showed his forethought greatly.
 Two new and well-made galleys
 they had upon the flood,
 With two broad ships of burden;
 both were strong and good.
 A ship of state went with them;
 than this had ne'er a better,
 By any friend or foe-man,
 on the shores of any land, been seen upon the water.
 To start they now are willing;
 already on the ships
 Were the clothes and horses loaded.
 Then from Wâ-te's lips
 Came kindly words to Hettel;
 he begged him to feel easy,
 Till they should again be coming,
 for to do his bidding they would all be busy.
 The king to him said mournfully:
 "I give into your care
 The knights, untaught and youthful,
 who such risks will dare,
 With you upon this errand:
 most earnestly I pray you
 That, for your honor, daily
 you teach these youths with care, and make them to obey you."
 Him thus Wâ-te answered:
 "To that give not a thought;
 Keep a brave heart, I beg you,
 that here at home, in nought
 You fail of being steadfast,
 where'er your honor reaches:
 Watch well, too, o'er our holdings:
 these youths shall learn from me what wisdom teaches."
 The good and trusty Fru-te
 the wealth of the king did guard,—
 The gold and costly jewels,
 and of many things a hoard.
 The king was free in spending
 whatsoe'er was wanted;
 If Fru-te aught did ask for,
 thirty-fold to him he gladly granted.
 A hundred men were chosen,
 and now within the ship,
 Wherein to woo the maiden
 his friends must cross the deep,
 All craftily were hidden,
 to help them, if 'twere needful.
 Gifts both rich and worthy
 the king to give these faithful men was heedful.
 With these, among the followers,
 every rank was seen;
 Of knights and squires also,
 thirty hundred men,
 Who, for toil and struggle,
 from far-off lands came riding.
 Then said the king to his lieges:
 "May God in heaven to you give careful guiding."
 To him thus Horant answered:
 "From fear now be you free;

When you shall see us coming,
 you then with us will see
 A maid so fair and lovely,
 you well may wish to greet her."
 This the king heard gladly,
 but far was the day when he at last should meet her.
 They took their leave with kisses,
 the king and many a guest;
 For these the king was feeling
 wearisome unrest.
 While they for him are toiling,
 each hour he fear must borrow;
 He forsooth was downcast,
 and nought could cheer him, in his mood of sorrow.
 This was for his welfare,
 that a wind from out the north
 Now their sails was swelling,
 and briskly helped them forth.
 The ships were wafted evenly,
 as they from land were turning;
 But hardships they had known not
 the youths, upon their way, ere long were learning.
 The truth we cannot tell you,
 nor can it e'en be guessed,
 For nights full six and thirty
 what lodgings gave them rest,
 While upon the water.
 The youths they with them carried,
 Bound by oaths of fealty,
 swore again to keep them, where'er they tarried.
 However willing were they
 to sail on the tossing sea,
 Yet sometimes it befell them
 in great unrest to be.
 Ease they took but seldom,
 as the waves would spare it;
 But he who ploughs the waters
 pain must often feel, and yet must bear it.
 After the waves had borne them
 full a thousand miles,
 They came to Hagen's castle,
 where, as was said erewhiles,
 He, the master of Ballian,
 shamefully had lorded:
 This was a wicked falsehood,
 the deeds were never done as the tale was worded.
 When now the men from Hegeling
 over the sea had gone,
 And neared wild Hagen's castle,
 their coming soon was known;
 Much the folk there wondered
 from what far kingdom sailing
 The waves had borne them thither;
 how finely they were clad all men were telling.
 First the ship with an anchor
 was fastened on the strand;
 To furl the sails then quickly
 each gave a ready hand.
 It was not long thereafter
 before the news was bruited,
 Throughout King Hagen's castle,
 that ships, with unknown men, in his harbor floated.
 Now on the shore they landed,
 and did their goods unlade;
 Whatever could be wanted
 on the sands, for sale, they spread,
 And all that any asked for.
 In wealth they were not lacking;
 But tho' their men had silver,
 'twas little that they bought, or for themselves were taking.
 Clothed in the garb of tradesmen,
 on the shore did stand

Sixty men or over,
 well-dight, a goodly band.
 Fru-te, the lord of Denmark,
 was busy as their leader;
 His clothing was far better
 than there was worn by any other trader.
 The worthy lord and master
 over Ballian town,
 When he heard of their coming,
 and the riches they did own,
 Rode down with many followers
 to where those crafty sellers
 He found, himself awaiting.
 Kind was the mien of all who there were dwellers.
 First the master asked them:
 "Whence their way they had made,
 And over the sea come thither?"
 To him then Fru-te said:
 "God have you in his keeping;
 we from afar are sailing;
 Tradesmen truly are we;
 our masters rich, near by, in ships are dwelling."
 "Let peace with us be plighted,"
 old Wâ-te then began;
 But from the master's grimness,
 the truth to see was plain,
 That, where he was the ruler,
 stern and harsh was his bearing.
 Straightway then to Hagen
 they led the guests, who with their tale were faring.
 Hagen said, as he met them:
 "Safeguard to you I give;
 My peace I pledge you willingly.
 He shall no longer live,
 But hang upon the gallows,
 who these guests shall harry:
 Let them not be fearful;
 them shall nothing harm while in my land they tarry."
 Rich and costly jewels
 they to Hagen gave,
 In worth, of marks a thousand.
 From them he nought did crave,
 Nor even so much as a penny;
 but what for sale they offered
 He begged of them to show him,
 such as to knights and ladies might be proffered.
 For all he thanked them warmly;
 he said: "If I should live
 Not more than three days longer,
 for all that now they give
 My guests shall be rewarded.
 If my liegeman do not heed me,
 And these for aught be lacking,
 all shall then for this with right upbraid me."
 Now the gifts they gave him
 the king with his men did share;
 Among them there were necklaces,
 fit for ladies fair,
 With finger-rings and arm-bands,
 as well as ribands dainty,
 And head-gear, to bedeck them:
 these the king to many gave in plenty.
 His wife and lovely daughter
 now most rightly thought
 That never to their kingdom
 had gifts for them been brought,
 That were so rare and costly,
 by sellers or by traders.
 Horant and Wâ-te also
 in sending gifts to court were now the leaders.
 Sixty silken garments,
 the best that e'er were sold,

Up to the shore were carried,
 and forty wrought with gold.
 They would have prized but lightly
 cloths from Bagdad even;
 Of linen suits a hundred,
 the best they had, now to the king were given.
 Beside the handsome clothing,
 made of silken stuff,
 Of richest inner garments
 they also gave enough;
 There might perhaps be forty,
 or more, if reckoned fully;
 Could ever man buy praises,
 they by their costly gifts had gained them truly.
 Twelve Castilian horses,
 all saddled, were brought, I trow;
 Also many breastplates,
 and well-made helmets, too,
 Men were bidden to carry;
 twelve bucklers likewise bore they,
 Rimmed with golden edges.
 Kind were Hagen's guests; free givers were they.
 Then, too, with gifts came riding
 Horant the brave and bold;
 Irold the strong came with him;
 this to the king was told:
 'Twas said to him, moreover,
 that those now thither faring
 Of lands were the lords and owners.
 This might well be seen by the gifts they were bearing.
 After these came riding
 four and twenty men
 Whom they were thither leading,
 well-bred were they, I ween;
 Such also was their clothing,
 they seemed as if well fitted,
 And now in truth were coming,
 that very day to be by Hagen knighted.
 Then unto King Hagen
 one of his friends thus spake:
 "The gifts the men now bring you
 'tis best you deign to take:
 Never must you leave them
 unthanked for all their treasure."
 Hagen lacked not riches,
 but yet his thanks he gave them without measure.
 He said: "I thank you kindly,
 as I of right should do."
 Then he bade that his stewards
 to see the gifts should go;
 And also that the clothing,
 piece by piece, be shown them.
 Glad were they to see them,
 and wondered greatly as they gazed upon them.
 Then said one of the stewards:
 "Hear now the truth I tell:
 Chests there are of silver,
 and filled with gold as well,
 With many costly jewels,
 rich and kingly even:
 Marks fully twenty thousand
 the goods are worth, which they to you have given."
 Then the king thus answered:
 "Blessings on my guests!
 I now will share with others
 the riches in these chests."
 Then to his knights was given
 whate'er of these they wanted;
 To every one among them
 all that he might wish by the king was granted.
 The king now seated near him
 both the two young men,—

Irold and also Horant;
 he began to ask them then,
 "Whence to his kingdom sailing,
 they to come had striven?
 Gifts so rich and worthy
 have ne'er before by guests to me been given."
 Then spake the knightly Horant:
 "This shall you know full well;
 My lord, now hear us kindly
 while we our sorrows tell.
 Outlawed wanderers are we,
 and from our homes were driven;
 A king most rich and mighty,
 to wreak his anger, woe to us hath given."
 Then spake again wild Hagen:
 "What may be his name,
 From whose rich kingdom driven,
 outcasts you became?
 You of wealth are owners,
 and, if not by his wits forsaken,
 To keep such worthy lieges
 within his land he would some pains have taken."
 He asked "Who them had outlawed,
 and what name he bore?
 Of what misdoings guilty,
 had they to this far shore
 Made their flight in sorrow,
 to ask the help of strangers?"
 To him then answered Horant:
 "To you will we make known our woes and dangers.
 "He bears the name of 'Hettel,
 Lord of the Hegeling land';
 Brave and mighty is he,
 and sways with a heavy hand.
 We of all our happiness
 have been robbed and plundered;
 Of right are we embittered,
 since from our land and home we now are sundered."
 To him spoke Hagen kindly:
 "This to your good shall turn;
 I will in full repay you
 the losses that you mourn.
 If I make myself a beggar,
 by thus so freely giving,
 Yet from the king of the Hegelings
 you need not ask for help while I am living.
 "If you, good knights," he added,
 "here with me will stay,
 With you will I share right gladly
 the lands I own to-day;
 Such guerdon by King Hettel
 ne'er to you was given.
 The wealth from you he has taken,
 that give I you, and more by tenfold even."
 "To stay with you we are ready,"
 then said Horant the Dane,
 "But we fear that when King Hettel
 shall learn that we were seen
 Within the Irish borders,
 he will find a way to reach us;
 And I am ever dreading
 that we can nowhere live, and this he'll teach us."
 Then to the band of wanderers
 the lordly Hagen said:
 "Do what now I bid you,
 and a home for you is made.
 Never will King Hettel
 dare for your harm to seek you
 Within my land and kingdom;
 it were a wrong to me from hence to take you."
 He bade they should be sheltered,
 at once, within his town;

Then to his men and lieges
 he made his wishes known,
 That now unto the wanderers
 all honor should be granted.
 The water-weary sailors
 soon found the rest that they so long had wanted.
 Then the townsmen freely
 did the king's behest;
 To do it they were ready:
 houses, the very best,
 Forty, or even over,
 were empty left, to be taken
 By the Danish sailors;
 their homes, by the king's good lieges were willingly forsaken.
 Up on the beach were carried
 the wares, full many a pile,
 That in the ships lay hidden.
 Their owners thought, the while,
 That they would rather struggle
 with storms upon the water,
 Than to seek their luck and welfare
 in wooing Hilda, Hagen's lovely daughter.
 Hagen bade his followers:
 "Now ask these guests of mine
 If they will deign most kindly
 to eat my bread and wine,
 Till they, within my kingdom,
 on lands they hold are living."
 The Danish Fru-te answered:
 "To take your food would shame to us be giving."
 "If erst the great King Hettel
 had been to us so good,
 That he both gold and silver
 would give to us for food,
 We in our houses had them,
 and might of them be wasteful;
 We e'en could stay our hunger,
 and feed thereon, if this to us were tasteful."
 'Twas bidden then by Fru-te
 that his booth should be set up.
 To see for sale such riches
 men ne'er again could hope.
 Never within their borders
 did any trader offer
 Fine goods at such a bargain;
 they easily were sold before the day was over.
 All could buy who wished them,
 gold and jewels rare.
 The king, by greatest kindness,
 was to his guests made dear.
 If any, without buying,
 still these treasures wanted,
 The traders were so friendly
 that they, as gifts, the goods to many granted.
 Whate'er of Wâ-te or Fru-te
 was said by any one,—
 Of all the deeds of kindness
 that here by them were done,—
 The tale might not be trusted,
 how they for these were ready;
 They strove to gain high praises,
 and this at court was told to many a lady.
 Of the poor nor man nor woman
 for clothes was seen to lack;
 To those in need among them
 they gave their pledges back,
 And from debt they freed them.
 To the princess, morn and even,
 Oft by her faithful steward
 the tale of these guests from far was truly given.
 To the king she made her prayer:
 "Dearest father mine,

Ask that these guests so worthy
 to ride to court will deign.
 They say that one among them
 hath charms beyond all measure;
 Should he to your bidding listen,
 the sight of him oftimes would give me pleasure."
 To her the king thus answered:
 "That shall quickly be;
 His well-bred ways and bearing
 I soon will let you see."
 But still the great King Hagen
 never yet had known him;
 Long the ladies waited
 till Wâ-te came, and they could look upon him.
 Word to the guests was carried;
 to them 'twas kindly said,
 That if it e'er should happen
 that they of aught had need,
 They should to the king betake them,
 and his food be sharing.
 To Fru-te this was pleasing,
 for wise he was, not less than he was daring.
 Those who came from Denmark,
 when at court, took care
 Ever to be blameless
 for the clothes that they should wear:
 'Twas so with the men of Wâ-te,
 from Sturm-land thither faring,
 And than himself no sword-knight
 in any land could show a finer bearing.
 Those who came with Morunc
 wore mantles over all,
 With robes from far Kampalia.
 Fiery red, as a coal,
 Gold and gems that sparkled
 on their clothes were shining.
 Irold, the daring champion,
 came not alone, young Hilda bent on winning.
 Thither came brave Horant;
 all others he out-vied
 In rich and costly clothing.
 With mantles long and wide,
 Gay in hue and gaudy,
 his men were decked out brightly:
 Those brave men from Denmark
 proudly came, and had a look most knightly.
 Tho' Hagen's birth was kingly,
 and lordly was his mood,
 He yet went forth to meet them.
 His daughter, fair and good,
 Rose up before old Wâ-te
 from where she now was seated.
 Such was Wâ-te's bearing
 as if with smiles his friends he never greeted.
 She said, in way most seemly:
 "Welcome to you I give;
 Both I and the king, my father,
 must from your looks believe
 That you are weary warriors,
 and sorely have been fighting.
 Good-will the king will show you,
 and soon his faith to you will he be plighting."
 To her they all bent lowly;
 their ways, they were well-bred.
 The king then bade to be seated,
 as hosts are wont to bid.
 Of drink to them was given,
 wine the best and rarest;
 Better ne'er was tasted
 in the home of any lord, albeit the fairest.
 In talk and fun and merriment
 seated were they all.

Soon the queenly maiden
 was seen to leave the hall:
 But first she begged her father
 the kindness now to show her
 To bid the knights so worthy
 to come to her, for pastime, to her bower.
 Her wish the king then granted,
 (so to us, 'tis said);
 His young and lovely daughter
 at this was truly glad.
 Soon fair clothes and jewels
 the maidens all were wearing;
 And earnestly were watching
 the many knights from far, to see their bearing.
 When now the elder Hilda
 sat by her daughter fair,
 Each one of her lovely maidens
 demeaned herself with care;
 So that all who saw her
 high in breeding thought her,
 And nothing else could say of her,
 but that she was indeed a king's fair daughter.
 Now bade they that old Wā-te
 should to the maids be brought;
 Though he was gray and aged,
 none the less they thought,
 To guard against his wooing,
 they must as children meet him.
 Then to the aged Wā-te
 stepped forth the youthful queen, right glad to greet him.
 She was the first to do so,
 but wished she might be spared
 When she now must kiss him:
 broad and gray was his beard,
 And the hair of the aged Wā-te
 with golden strings was braided.
 He and the Danish Fru-te
 the queen's behest to seat them slowly heeded.
 Both the well-clad heroes
 before their seats now stood;
 Well they knew fine breeding,
 and made their teaching good.
 In many a bitter struggle,
 in their manhood early,
 They gained a name as warriors;
 and men to them gave praises for it fairly.
 Queen Hilda and her daughter,
 in lively, merry mood,
 Began to ask of Wā-te,
 whether he thought it good,
 Thus with lovely ladies
 to sit in ease and pleasure,
 Or if to him 'twere better
 his strength in stormy fight with foes to measure?
 The aged Wā-te answered: "To me the last seems best;
 Altho' among fair ladies
 glad am I to rest,
 Never am I happier
 than when with knights most daring,
 Wherever that may happen,
 upon the stormy field the fight I am sharing."
 At this the gay young maiden
 broke into laughter loud;
 Well she saw, with ladies,
 his stern, uneasy mood.
 With this in the halls yet longer
 were the maidens merry;
 Queen Hilda and her daughter
 to talk with Morunc's knights were never weary.
 She asked about old Wā-te:
 "Say, by what name is he known?
 Has he any liegemen?
 Doth he lands and castles own?

Has he a wife and children
 in the land whence he is roving?
 There, as I am thinking,
 at his home and hearth, there must be little loving."
 Then answered one of the warriors:
 "Both children and a wife
 In his home and land await him.
 His riches and his life
 He risketh for his duty;
 a hero brave he has shown him.
 A bold and daring champion,
 throughout his life, both friend and foe have known him."
 Irold the tale was telling
 about this fearless knight,
 That never worthier liegeman,
 or bolder man in fight,
 A king need e'er be seeking,
 his lands and castles over:
 Though mildly now he bears him,
 there ne'er was found a stronger or a braver.
 The queen then said to Wā-te:
 "Give heed to what I say;
 Since in his Danish kingdom
 Hettel forbids your stay,
 I here, within my borders,
 a home will gladly give you;
 There lives no lord so mighty
 that he would ever dare from hence to drive you."
 Then to the queen he answered:
 "I too, myself, own land;
 There give I clothes and horses,
 at will, with open hand.
 To wait on you as liegeman,
 would make me sorry-hearted;
 And from my lands and castles,
 more than a year, I never can be parted."
 At last they all were going;
 then begged the lovely queen,
 That when at court they waited,
 they always might be seen
 Seated among the ladies;
 no shame by this were done them:
 Then said to her brave Irold,
 that in their home this seat was ever shown them.
 To load with gifts these wanderers
 the king was ever bent.
 But in a mood so haughty
 had they been thither sent,
 To no man were they willing
 to be for a mark beholden.
 Hagen, the king, was lordly,
 and took it ill that their pride should them embolden.
 To the king they now betook them;
 many were they who came;
 There they found, for pastime,
 for each some merry game:
 Draughts were many playing,
 or spear and shield were trying;
 For these they cared but little,
 but ever were in Hagen's praises vying.
 As happens oft in Ireland,
 with every kind of fun
 Forthwith the men made merry.
 In this old Wā-te won
 A friend for himself in Hagen;
 but to win the ladies' praises,
 Horant, the knight from Denmark,
 his time in lightsome frolic with them passes.
 Fru-te and also Wā-te
 were knights full brave and bold;
 When standing near each other,
 both alike looked old.

Their locks were gray and hoary,
 and with gold were twisted;
 But where the bold were needed,
 to show their bravery earnestly they listed.
 The followers of King Hagen
 wore their shields at court,
 With clubs as well as bucklers;
 there they strove in sport,
 In the sword-play slashing;
 thrusts of spears they parried;
 Well themselves they shielded.
 The youthful knights in games were never wearied.
 Then asked the brave King Hagen
 of Wâ-te and his men,
 "If, where they erst were living,
 such fights were ever seen,
 Or such heavy onslaughts,
 as his good knights were dealing,
 Here in his Irish kingdom?"
 A smile of scorn o'er Wâ-te's face was stealing.
 Then quoth the knight from Sturm-land:
 "The like I never saw;
 If any here could teach it,
 from here would I not withdraw
 Till a year was fully ended,
 and I had learned it rightly.
 Whoe'er should be my master,
 for his care and pains would I not reward him lightly."
 The king to him then answered:
 "For the love to you I bear,
 I will bid my best of masters
 teach you his art with care,
 Till the three strokes are easy,
 that, in field-storms raging,
 Men give to one another;
 by this will you be helped when battle waging."
 Then came a fencing-master,
 and began his craft to show
 To Wâ-te, the daring fighter;
 in him he found a foe
 Who fear for his life soon gave him.
 Wâ-te his onset parried,
 With all the skill of a fencer.
 The face of Fru-te the Dane a smile now carried.
 To save himself, the teacher
 gave a spring as wide
 As doth an untamed leopard.
 Wâ-te his weapon plied,
 And in his hand it clattered,
 until the fire-sparks glistened
 Upon his foeman's buckler;
 he well might thank the youth who to him had listened.
 Then said the king, wild Hagen:
 "Give me the sword in hand.
 I will take a little pastime
 with him of the Sturmisch land;
 I will be his teacher,
 and he my four strokes be learning.
 He for this will thank me."
 Soon was the king high praise from Wâ-te earning.
 To him old Wâ-te answered:
 "A pledge I now must hear
 That I from you, great Hagen,
 no guile soe'er may fear;
 Should I by you be wounded,
 with ladies' scorn shall I redden."
 In the fight was Wâ-te nimble;
 such quickness to believe should none be bidden.
 The simple, untaught fencer
 smote Hagen many a blow;
 Till, like a wet brand steaming,
 was the king before his foe.

The learner outdid his teacher:
 well his strength he boasted.
 The host laid strokes unnumbered
 upon the guest, who in his skill had trusted.
 Many looked on gladly
 to see the strength of both.
 To own the skill of Wâ-te
 the king was nothing loth;
 He might have shown his anger,
 and brought no shame upon him.
 Great was the strength of Wâ-te,
 but yet 'twas seen that Hagen had outdone him.
 To the king then spake old Wâ-te:
 "Let each no favor show,
 While we together struggle.
 Well have I learned from you
 Your four strokes to be plying;
 my thanks be you now sharing."
 Such thanks he later showed him
 as doth a fighting Frank or Saxon daring.
 No more a truce was thought of
 by Wâ-te and the king;
 With strokes that loud were crashing,
 the hall began to ring.
 Harder blows than ever
 they gave, as now they battled;
 All their thrusts were sudden;
 the knobs upon their swords snapped off and rattled.
 The two sat down to rest them;
 then Hagen said to his guest:
 "You fain would be a learner,
 but you in truth are the best
 That ever I was teaching
 the skill that the foeman dazes.
 Wherever you are fighting,
 you in the field will win most worthy praises."
 Then to the king spake Irold:
 "My lord, the strife is done
 That you so well were waging;
 such fights have we seen won,
 In the land of our king and master.
 Oft, at home, we freely
 Try our skill with weapons;
 knights and squires there meet in matches daily."
 Then again spoke Hagen:
 "Did I this understand,
 I never a fighting weapon
 had taken in my hand.
 No youth have I ever met with
 who was so quick at learning."
 When to these words they listened,
 the face of many a one to smiles was turning.
 Now by the king 'twas granted
 to his guests to pass the day
 As they might all be choosing.
 Glad of this were they,
 The men from out the Northland.
 When the hours grew weary,
 They vied huge stones in hurling;
 or else in shooting arrows made them merry.

Tale the Sixth. HOW SWEETLY HORANT SANG.

It came to pass one evening,
 good luck did so befall,
 That Horant, the knight of Daneland,
 sang before them all.
 His singing was so wondrous
 that all who listened near him
 Found his song well-pleasing;
 the little birds all hushed their notes to hear him.

King Hagen heard him gladly,
 and with him all his men:
 The song of the Danish Horant
 friends for him did gain.
 Likewise the queenly mother
 hearkened with ear befitting,
 As it sounded thro' the opening
 where she upon the leaded roof was sitting.
 Then spake the fair young Hilda:
 "What is it that I hear?
 Just now a song the sweetest
 was thrilling on mine ear,
 That e'er from any singer
 I heard until this hour.
 Would to God in heaven
 my chamberlain to raise such notes had power!"
 Then she bade them bring her
 him who so sweetly sung;
 Soon as the knight came forward,
 thanks were on her tongue.
 For her with song the evening
 blissfully was ended;
 By Lady Hilda's women
 the minstrel-knight was carefully befriended.
 Then spake the lovely Hilda:
 "Once more you must let us hear
 The songs that you this evening
 have made to us so dear.
 Truly it were blissful
 every day, at even,
 To hear from you such singing;
 for this would great reward to you be given."
 "Since you your thanks, fair lady,
 have thus on me bestowed,
 Every day will I gladly
 sing you a song as good;
 And whoso listens rightly
 shall find his pains departed,
 His cares shall all be lessened,
 and he henceforth will feel himself light-hearted."
 When he his word had given,
 forthwith he left the queen.
 Great reward in Ireland
 did his singing win;
 Never in his birthland
 had such to him been meted.
 Thus did the knight from Denmark
 give his help to Hettel, as him befitted.
 Soon as the night was ended,
 with the early dawn of day,
 Horant raised his carol;
 the birds soon stopped their lay,
 And to his song they listened,
 while in hedges hidden.
 The folk who yet were sleeping
 rested no more, by his sweet tones upbidden.
 Horant's song rose softly,
 higher and yet more sweet;
 King Hagen also heard it,
 while near his wife was his seat.
 From out their inner chamber
 drawn to the roof, they waited;
 Their guest of this had warning;
 and Hilda the young gave ear, where she was seated.
 The daughter of wild Hagen
 with her maids around her heard
 From where they sat and listened;
 and now each little bird
 Wholly forgot his singing,
 and in the court-yard lighted;
 The warriors hearkened also,
 and well the song of the Danish minstrel greeted.

Thanks to him were given
 by women and by men;
 "But," said the Danish Fru-te,
 "would that I ne'er again
 Such songs might hear him singing.
 Whom would he be pleasing?
 To whom is my witless nephew
 such worthless morning-hymns so bent on raising?"
 Then spake King Hagen's liegemen:
 "My lord, let him be heard;
 There's none so sick is lying
 but would in truth be cheered,
 If to the songs he listened
 which fall from him so sweetly."
 Said Hagen: "Would to Heaven
 such skill to sing were mine; 'twould glad me greatly."
 When the knightly minstrel
 three songs to the end had sung,
 No one there who heard him
 thought they were too long,
 The turn of a hand, not longer,
 they had thought it lasted,
 E'en if they had listened
 while for a thousand miles a horseman hasted.
 When his song he ended,
 and to leave his seat was seen,
 The youthful, queenly maiden
 more blithe had never been,
 Nor decked, at early morning,
 in gayer clothes or better;
 Forthwith the high-born lady
 sent to beg her father now to meet her.
 Then came her father quickly,
 and on the maiden looked,
 While, in a mood of sadness,
 her father's chin she stroked;
 With her hand she coaxed him,
 to make her word the stronger,
 And said: "My dearest father,
 bid that he at court may sing yet longer."
 He answered: "Best loved daughter,
 if again, at the hour of eve,
 His songs he deigns to sing you,
 a thousand pounds I'll give.
 But now a mien so lofty
 these guests of ours are wearing,
 To us 'tis not so pleasant
 here, at court, to give his songs a hearing."
 However much she pressed him,
 would the king no longer stay;
 Then strove again young Horant,
 and never on any day,
 Had his knightly song been better.
 Sick and well together
 All lost their wits in hearing,
 and none could leave who to listen once came hither.
 The wild beasts in the forest
 let their pasture grow;
 The little worms that creeping
 through grass are wont to go,
 The fishes, too, that ever
 amidst the waves were swimming,
 All now stopped to listen;
 the singer's heart with pride was overbrimming.
 Whatever he might sing to them,
 to no one seemed it long;
 Ill vied with his song the choral
 which by priests is sung.
 Even the bells no longer
 rang as of yore so sweetly;
 Every one who heard him
 was moved by Horant's song, and saddened greatly.

Then begged the lovely maiden
that he to her be brought;
Without her father's knowledge,
she slyly this besought.
From her mother, Hilda, also
must the tale be hidden
That unto her, in her bower,
unknown to all, the minstrel had been bidden.
It was a yielding chamberlain
who did the wages gain,
That, for his help, she gave him;
red gold it was, I ween.
Glittering and heavy,
with armlets twelve, full-weighted.
'Twas thus within her bower
the maid, at eventide, the singer greeted.
By hidden ways he did it;
Horant was glad indeed
That such good-will and kindness,
at court, had been his meed.
To win her love for his master
from far had he been faring;
To his tuneful skill he owed it
that she such friendly will to him was bearing.
She bade her faithful chamberlain
to stand before the house;
That so there might be no one
who could the threshold cross
Until the songs were ended,
soon heard with praises truthful.
None went into her bower
but Horant only and Morunc the youthful.
She bade the bard be seated:
"Now sing to me once more,"
Thus spake the high-born maiden,
"those songs I heard before.
For this I feel sore craving;
than aught beside 'tis sweeter
Unto your lays to listen;
than any gem or pastime 'tis far better."
"If I might dare to sing to you,
most fair and lovely maid,
And never need be fearful
for this to lose my head,
Thro' your father's anger,
never will I falter
In any wise to serve you,
if in my master's land you'll seek a shelter."
He then began a ditty
of a mermaid of Amil ,
Which never man nor Christian
had learned to sing or say,
Although he may have heard it
on some wild, unknown water.
In this the good knight, Horant,
gave honor meet at court to Hagen's daughter.
At last, when he the love-song
had sung unto the end,
Then said the lovely maiden:
"Thanks I give, my friend."
She drew a ring from her finger,
nought of gold were fairer,
And said: "I give it gladly;
be this of my good-will to you the bearer."
Now her word she pledged him,
and with it gave her hand:
"Should she of a crown be wearer,
and ever sway the land,
That ne'er by the hand of any
need he be further driven
Than unto her in her castle;
there to live in honor would leave be given."

Of all she pressed upon him
nothing would he take
Unless indeed a girdle.
He said: "Let no man speak,
And say that I the maiden
e'er for myself was wooing;
I will to my master bring her,
and for this his heart shall be with bliss o'erflowing."
She asked: "Who is thy master?
By name how is he known?
Have e'er his liegemen crowned him?
And any lands doth he own?
For love of thee, most truly,
good-will I bear him ever."
The knight from Denmark answered:
"A king so rich and mighty saw I never."
He said: "To none betray us,
most fair and lovely maid;
To thee will I tell most gladly
what our master said,
When from his land we started,
hither to come at his bidding;
For thy dear sake, fair lady,
unto thy father's land and castle speeding."
She said: "Then tell me freely
the errand on which you're sent
By him you call your master;
if my will that way is bent
I shall let you know it truly,
before we yet are parted."
But Horant feared wild Hagen,
and began at court to feel himself faint-hearted.
To the lady thus he answered:
"To you he sends this word,—
That his heart for you is longing;
his love alone is stirred.
For him, I beg, fair lady,
let now your kindness waken;
He from other women
has for your sake his love and longing taken."
She said: "May God reward him;
such love for me he shows.
If he in birth is my fellow,
I fain would be his spouse,
If you will deign to sing to me
every morn and even."
He said: "That will I gladly;
to this no care by you need e'er be given."
Quoth he to the queenly Hilda:
"Most fair and high-born maid,
There daily live with my master,
and long at court have staid,
Twelve minstrels who, before me,
earn much higher praises;
But, though sweet their singing,
my lord, the king, in song still better pleases."
She said: "If your loving master
in song so skilful be,
Of longing for him, truly,
I never can be free;
My best of thanks I give him
for the love he now is showing,
And, dared I leave my father,
gladly from here would I with you be going."
Then spake the knightly Morunc:
"Lady, with us there are
Warriors full seven hundred:
our weal or woe they share,
And each for this is ready;
if once in our hands we have you,
Know you nor fear nor sorrow
lest we to meet wild Hagen's wrath should leave you."

He said: "From Hagen's kingdom
 we wish forthwith to go;
 Therefore beg your father
 the kindness to us to show,
 Youthful, high-born maiden,
 that he and your queenly mother
 Will deign our bark to look on;
 and you must also come, e'en if no other."
 "That will I do most gladly,
 if my father's leave you have;
 Of him and those about him
 this boon you now must crave,
 That I and my maidens also
 may ride to the shore some morning.
 If he shall grant your wishes,
 three days before, of the time you must give us warning."
 The first of all the chamberlains
 was wont, and had a right,
 Often to be with the maidens.
 Just then, this very knight
 There had come for pastime,
 and to give to them his greeting;
 There found he Horant and Morunc;
 well might they fear some harm was their lives awaiting.
 He said to Lady Hilda:
 "Who are they sitting here?"
 From the lord so hot and hasty
 was never such wrath to fear.
 He said: "Whoe'er allowed you
 to come into this bower?
 Whoso in this hath helped you
 ne'er showed you falser friendship to this hour."
 She said: "Now soothe your anger:
 in peace pray let them live.
 If to yourself great evil
 you do not wish to give,
 You must unseen by any,
 them to their rooms be bringing;
 It else hath helped but little
 that his knightly songs the minstrel here was singing."
 "Is this the knight," he asked her,
 "they say so well can sing?
 E'en such a minstrel know I:
 never hath any king
 Had a braver fighter.
 My father and his mother
 Were children of one father;
 worthier knight than he there's not another."
 The maid began to ask him:
 "Tell me, then, his name."
 He said: "Men call him Horant;
 from the Danish land he came.
 Although no crown he weareth,
 he yet for one is fitted:
 We now know not each other,
 but once at Hettel's court our love we plighted."
 When Morunc, too, was telling
 that erst, in his fatherland,
 He also had been outlawed,
 his heart was sorely pained.
 His eyes with tears were welling,
 and now were overflowing;
 Then the queenly lady
 kindly looked on him, her sorrow showing.
 Then saw the chamberlain also
 how that his eyes were wet.
 He said: "Most worthy lady,
 these friends whom here we meet
 I know to be my kinsmen;
 help now that all goes rightly
 With both these worthy champions:
 most careful will I be to keep them fitly."

Much for them he sorrowed,
 and felt heart-pain, forsooth;
 "Durst I before my ladies,
 I would kiss upon the mouth
 Each of these knights so worthy.
 The days indeed are many
 Since tidings of King Hettel
 I could from a Hegeling ask, or learn from any."
 Then spake the maiden further:
 "Since these thy kinsmen be,
 Now so much the dearer
 are they as guests to me.
 Known unto my father
 thou should'st quickly make them;
 They will not then so hastily
 to their homes afar across the sea betake them."
 A busy talk began they,
 those two young heroes brave;
 Morunc unto the chamberlain
 his mind most freely gave.
 He said for Lady Hilda
 they came within those borders;
 And that their master Hettel
 to bring her back had sent them, as her warders.
 Then said to them the chamberlain:
 "A twofold care I feel,
 As liegeman of my master,
 and to help you, too, as well.
 How could I turn his anger,
 if he knew you now were seeking
 To win his maiden daughter?
 Never from here could you your way be taking."
 Then spake the knightly Horant:
 "Hear well what now I say;
 In four days' time to Hagen,
 we will come, and him will pray
 That we may leave his kingdom,
 if such may be his pleasure.
 The king will then make ready
 gifts for us of clothes, as well as treasure.
 "We will ask for nothing further,
 (help you here must lend,)
 But that Hagen shall be willing,
 as well beseems a friend,
 To come to the shore to see us,
 my lady with him riding,—
 His wife, the high-born Hilda;
 there to see the ship in which we're biding.
 "Might we in this be lucky,
 our toil we well shall spend;
 And, with a happy outcome,
 our sorrows have an end.
 If only to the seashore
 he will ride with his daughter,
 We well shall be rewarded
 at home by our master Hettel, for whom we sought her."
 Then from out the castle
 they were led by the crafty man,
 So that the kingly Hagen
 mistrusted not their plan.
 When, for their floating shelter,
 they the courtyard quitted,
 All they had done for their master
 should not, I ween, by him at home be slighted.
 They told the aged Wâ-te
 what yet to none was known:
 They said the high-born maiden
 her love did freely own
 Unto their master, Hettel,
 for whom they now had sought her;
 They talked with wise old Wâ-te
 how best to bring her home across the water.

Then spake the aged Wâ-te:
 "Were she once outside the gate,
 And I the lovely maiden
 there might only meet,
 However hard the struggle
 that there we had with the foe-man,
 To cross her father's threshold
 none again should see that lovely woman."
 Their plot, well-laid and crafty,
 to no one did they break,
 But slyly made them ready
 their homeward way to take.
 This they told the warriors
 on board their ship there lying;
 Not loth were they to hear it,
 for now to sail the weary men were sighing.
 They quickly brought together
 such goods as they did own;
 Then, in stillness whispered,
 their hidden thought made known.
 Later, throughout Ireland,
 it was mourned, with bitter wailing;
 Though woe it brought to Hagen,
 the Hegeling's greatness would it soon be telling.
 Upon the fourth day's morning
 to court they bravely rode,
 With new and well-cut clothing;
 none better ever showed.
 Then the guests there gathered
 were their wishes speaking;
 Of the king and all his liegemen
 they asked that they their leave might now be taking.
 Then spake to them King Hagen:
 "Why will you leave my land?
 So far as I was able,
 I have striven for this end,—
 That you within my kingdom
 should meet with kindness only;
 Now would you hence be sailing,
 leaving me here, to lead a life all lonely."
 To him old Wâ-te answered:
 "The Hegeling king, our lord,
 Has sent to call us homeward;
 he will not hear a word
 Of aught but our forgiveness.
 Then, too, for us are mourning
 Those we left behind us;
 we therefore soon must back on our way be turning."
 Then said to him wild Hagen:
 "Your loss my heart doth break;
 Horses and fine clothing
 deign, for my love, to take,
 With gold and costly jewels.
 Right well it doth beseem me
 For all your gifts to pay you;
 in this shall no one ever dare to blame me."
 Then said the hoary Wâ-te:
 "Too rich am I to-day
 That I the gold you give us
 should wish to take away.
 Our master, whose forgiveness
 our friends have lately won us,
 The rich and mighty Hettel,
 in such a deed would truly never own us.
 "One thing we have yet further,
 my lord, to ask of thee;
 (If you this kindness show us,
 a worthy boon, 'twill be.)
 It is that you shall witness
 how well we can be feasting;
 Of food for hearty eaters
 we have in store what might three years be lasting.

"To all who ask we give it,
 for hence we sail o'er the deep;
 May God long give you honor,
 yourself may He ever keep.
 We now betake us homeward,
 we here may bide no longer;
 Now may you and your kinsfolk
 ride with us to our ship; no guard were stronger.
 "If but your lovely daughter,
 and with her my lady, your wife,
 Shall look upon our riches,
 glad will it make our life,
 And dear to us forever.
 If this to us be granted,
 Great and good King Hagen,
 from you no other gifts shall e'er be wanted."
 Then to his guests he answered,
 with seemly, well-bred mien:
 "Since you are now so earnest,
 at early morn shall be seen
 A hundred mares made ready,
 saddled for woman or maiden;
 I, too, will ride down with them;
 right glad am I that to see your ship I'm bidden."
 Then for the night they left him,
 and rode away to the shore.
 Then up on the beach was carried
 of wine a goodly store,
 That in the bark was lying;
 for food they were not lacking.
 By this the ship was lightened;
 wisely had Fru-te of Denmark his plans been making.

Tale the Seventh. HOW THE MAIDENS CAME TO SEE THE SHIP, AND WERE CARRIED TO HETTEL'S KINGDOM.

Early on the morrow,
 after the mass was said,
 To don their richest clothing
 strove each wife and maid:
 A throng of these King Hagen
 to the sandy shore was leading;
 And with them riding gayly
 a thousand stalwart Irish knights were speeding.
 Within the town of Ballian
 the guests had heard the mass.
 Of all the woe and sorrow,
 that soon would come to pass,
 Hagen as yet knew nothing;
 little honor was left him
 By his guests' withdrawal;
 this of his fair and well-born child bereft him.
 When now they all had ridden
 to the ships upon the strand,
 Queen Hilda and her ladies
 were lifted down on the sand.
 The young and lovely maidens
 to see the ships were taken:
 The traders' booths were open,
 and the goods did wonder great in the queen awaken.
 Many fair-wrought jewels
 lay in sight in the shops,
 Such as men prize highly;
 King Hagen to see them stops,
 And many with him also:
 soon as the goods were shown them,
 The maidens, too, must see them,
 and rings and bands of gold were pressed upon them.
 To see the sights King Hagen
 into a boat had gone:
 Not all the booths were open,
 nor all the goods were shown,

When Wâ-te's men heaved anchor
 up from the sea-sands deftly,
 And Hilda with her maidens
 was borne away from the land of her fathers swiftly.
 For no one's hate and anger
 Wâ-te greatly cares;
 Little he recks what happens
 to the shops of costly wares:
 Hilda, the queenly mother,
 was sundered from her daughter;
 The men, in the ship long hidden,
 up-sprang and sorrow made for Hagen on the water.
 Then the sails were hoisted,
 and 'twas seen that they were set:
 From the ship they threw the foemen,
 who thoroughly were wet,
 Like sea-birds on the water,
 when near the sands they flutter.
 For her daughter dear-beloved
 sorrow and anger the queen aloud did utter.
 When the weaponed fighters
 by Hagen there were seen,
 Then, in truth, how scornful
 and wrathful was his mien!
 "Now bring to me my long-spear,
 to feel it I will teach them;
 They all shall die full quickly
 when my strong right arm with that shall reach them!"
 Boldly then spoke Morunc:
 "Be not so much in haste!
 Though now you think to fight us,
 and to rush on us so fast
 With a thousand well-armed foemen,
 we yet will overthrow them,
 And fling them into the water;
 a damp, cold lodging we will quickly show them!"
 Still, brave Hagen's followers
 the fight would not give o'er;
 The water shone and glistened
 with the armor that they wore;
 Then they drew their long-swords,
 spears were thickly flying;
 But oars were dipped full quickly,
 and fast the boats away from the shore were hieing.
 The bold and daring Wâ-te
 from the sands had given a bound
 Into a well-manned row-boat;
 loud did his mail resound,
 As he, with fifty warriors,
 after Hilda hasted:
 Hagen's careless followers
 now must rouse themselves, no time they wasted.
 Onward came King Hagen;
 his fighting-gear he wore,
 And a heavy sword, the sharpest,
 he proudly with him bore;
 But now the aged Wâ-te
 almost too long had waited;
 Wild and grim was Hagen,
 and high his spear he raised 'gainst his foe belated.
 Loudly then he shouted,
 and bade his men make haste;
 None of all his followers
 would he allow to rest,
 Hoping these guests, now fleeing,
 who had been such traitors,
 Might be with speed o'ertaken,
 and either should be slain, or bound in fetters.
 The king had now about him
 fighters many and brave,
 But yet he could not follow
 across the wild sea-wave;

His ships were all unready,
 and many of them leaking,
 When now he would be sailing;
 of Hagen's blame for this were all soon speaking.
 On the gravelly sea-shore standing,
 no other way he knew
 But that more ships be builded
 for him and his liegemen true,
 And workmen called together,
 who must therein be speedy:
 All came who now were able,
 and these he found to be both skilled and ready.
 Upon the seventh morning,
 there left the Irish land
 The men sent forth by Hettel
 to ask for Hilda's hand,
 And bring to him the lady.
 They were a thousand barely;
 Hagen brought against them
 thirty hundred men, if reckoned fairly.
 The daring knights of Denmark
 sent men home before,
 To carry word to Hettel
 that Hagen's child they bore,
 And to his land would bring her,
 with honor him befitting.
 Though now they little thought it,
 still harder work erelong must they be meeting.
 To them their master, Hettel,
 in happy mood then spoke:
 "My sorrows now are over.
 Great toils my liegemen took
 For me in Hagen's kingdom,
 and now have brought me gladness;
 Since they on their errand left me,
 fear for their doom has filled my heart with sadness.
 "Dear friends, if with your tidings
 you have not me betrayed,
 And do not tell me falsely
 that you have seen the maid
 Near to my land and kingdom,
 and in my friends' safe-keeping,
 For your tale will I reward you,
 and gladly will your praise be ever speaking."
 They said: "No lie we tell you,
 that we the maid have seen;
 But when we miles had measured,
 the daughter of the queen
 Sadly said, for our welfare
 she feared, and was heavy-hearted,
 Lest the king, her father,
 to follow with his ships e'en then had started."
 For the tidings, Hettel gave them
 a hundred marks in worth;
 For all his knights there gathered,
 men at once brought forth
 Swords as well as helmets,
 and shields for them were bidden:
 Thus from Hettel's castle
 they went, as if to court, to bring the maiden.
 All the men he was able
 Hettel for this now sought;
 Greatly was he hoping,
 and much thereof he thought,
 So great a host to muster,
 and these so well outfitted,
 That never to king's fair daughter
 so fine a welcome might again be meted.
 In haste were all then bidden
 who ought with him to go;
 They still made ready slowly,
 till gifts he should bestow

Of all things that they needed;
 they for this were waiting.
 At length by him were gathered
 a thousand men or more, for Hilda's greeting.
 Gay were they in clothing,—
 'gainst this could none say nay,—
 Poor as well as wealthy
 were shining in war-array:
 To bring the lovely ladies
 to their new home and dwelling
 Were Hettel's lieges earnest;
 with lofty hopes of this their hearts were swelling.
 Soon as they left the castle,
 shouts the land did fill,
 As they their way were making
 thro' lowland and o'er hill;
 Men saw upon the pathways
 crowds still thronging nearer:
 Hettel hastened forward,
 to see the maid, than every other dearer.
 At last the aged Wā-te,
 the knight from the Sturmisch land,
 Had reached the Waalisch marches
 and stepped upon the sand.
 There on the shore were gathered
 the sailors, water-weary;
 Shelter they sought for Hilda,
 and in a friendly land were glad to tarry.
 Stakes for tents were driven
 near to the broad sea-flood
 By the followers of Wā-te;
 they were in happy mood.
 Erelong the news was bruited,
 and soon to them was given,
 That Hettel, king of the Hegelings,
 had left his home, and now was near them even;
 And that he with many liegemen
 was riding down to the shore,
 To meet his well-belovéd.
 Now hoped the maids the more
 That she with greatest honor
 should, as her birth befitted,
 Be brought into his kingdom.
 No more the thought of strife their hearts affrighted.
 The guests for nothing wanted,
 they had both wine and food;
 Those who were living near them
 freely on them bestowed
 The best that they were able;
 the wants of all they heeded;
 Whate'er they had they gave them,
 and left them not to lack for aught they needed.
 Hettel now drew nearer
 to those who had reached his land;
 And with him, gathered hastily,
 the strong and goodly band,
 Drawn from his father's kingdom.
 They came bedecked so gaily,
 And in such glittering armor,
 the guests looked on full glad, and praised them freely.
 Then the men of the Hegelings
 came down upon the plain,
 And soon the rushing riders
 a tilting-match began;
 All with youthful boldness
 for knightly prizes striving:
 Then came the Danish Fru-te,
 and with him Wā-te, wise as any living.
 They were seen from afar by Hettel;
 happy in heart was he.
 His horse he set a-prancing;
 right glad was he to see

Two of his bravest liegemen,
 sent by him o'er the water,
 With fighters bold to Ireland,
 in hopes to win for him wild Hagen's daughter.
 On him, too, looked they gladly,
 their worthy king, so good;
 Each day they spent there with him
 found them in happy mood.
 Wā-te with all his fellows,
 while far away they were living,
 Had known much bitter hardship:
 for this would Hettel now reward be giving.
 As he met his friendly liegemen,
 King Hettel wore a smile;
 Then said he to them kindly:
 "Much have I feared erewhile
 For you, my faithful helpers,
 and a heavy heart was bearing,
 Lest in Hagen's castles
 my men were held, and all were bondage sharing."
 Then for love he kissed them,
 both those gray old men;
 His eyes had never rested
 on so glad a sight as then,
 Nor on a fairer pasture
 had fed, with longing fonder.
 I ween that never to Hettel
 was aught so full of bliss and sudden wonder.
 Then spake the aged Wā-te:
 No harm to us was done;
 But yet a sway so mighty
 I ne'er before have known,
 As this that wild King Hagen
 over his lands now wieldeth:
 His followers bear them proudly,
 and he himself in strength to no one yieldeth.
 "It was a day as happy
 as ever could be thought,
 When we to you sent tidings
 that we had Hilda brought,
 The loveliest of maidens
 (no falsehood have I spoken,
 Believe the tale I tell you)
 that ever in this world my eyes did look on."
 The high-born knight then added:
 "Belike with greatest speed
 Will come these daring foemen;
 for this should you take heed
 Lest the angry Hagen
 soon shall overtake us
 Here within your marches;
 if so, his hatred bitter woe will make us."
 Then Wā-te and Sir Fru-te
 down to the shore did bring
 Many worthy followers,
 knights of Hettel, the king,
 There to see fair Hilda,
 and there must they await her.
 Upon their shining bucklers
 many a spear-shaft crashed in battle later.
 Now came the fair young maiden,
 under a comely hat;
 Then all the men of the Hegelings
 who on their horses sat
 By the side of the king, their master,
 upon the grass alighted.
 With merry hearts then gladly
 the well-bred throng their love and friendship plighted.
 Irold, he of Ortland,
 and Morunc of the Frisian land,
 Both of those brave champions,
 one on either hand,

Came with lovely Hilda,
 and Hettel soon were meeting;
 Worthy was she of praises.
 Now thought the maid to give the king her greeting.
 With her there came young maidens,
 twenty or even more,
 All clad in fair white linen,—
 whiter none e'er wore,—
 Or best of silken clothing,
 that could be found by any:
 Proud were they to wear them,
 and, gaily decked, they there were seen by many.
 The king, both good and stately,
 then began to greet
 With well-bred, seemly bearing,
 the maid he thought was meet
 To wear the crown hereafter.
 He gazed on her with yearning;
 Her in his arms he folded,
 and fondly kissed the maid, her face upturning.
 Then one by one he welcomed
 all the maidens fair;
 But one there was among them
 so lofty in her air
 She might of birth be kingly:
 in nought her kin were lacking.
 She was one of the maidens
 who with the griffin long her home was making.
 She bore the name of Hildeburg:
 from Hilda, Hagen's wife,
 She ever had won the honor
 befitting her worthy life;
 Born in the land of Portugal,
 thence had she been taken.
 She now saw many strangers:
 a longing sad for her friends did this awaken.
 Hettel to all the maidens
 gave a welcome free,
 Yet was their lot no brighter;
 for when they thought to see
 An end of all their sadness,
 upon the coming morrow,
 Soon as the day was dawning,
 there came to them again as great a sorrow.
 Her throng of high-born followers
 were greeted on every side;
 Near to Hagen's daughter
 on a flowery meadow wide,
 Under silken awnings,
 many there were seated.
 But Hagen was now too near them;
 to them from him must many ills be meted.

Tale the Eighth. HOW HAGEN FOLLOWED HIS DAUGHTER.

When the day was dawning,
 there was seen full well,
 And known by Horant of Daneland,
 a cross upon a sail,
 With other emblems blazoned,
 that pilgrims did betoken.
 For such a band of pilgrims
 in Wā-te's heart was little love bespoken.
 Loudly Morunc shouted
 to Irold brave and true:
 "Now ask our lord, King Hettel,
 what he thinks to do?
 A sail with the arms of Hagen
 comes to our shore too nearly:
 Too long have we been sleeping,
 and well to be rid of this will cost us dearly."

To Hettel the tale was carried
 that the father of his bride,
 Hither from Ireland sailing,
 with ships broad-built and wide
 As well as many a galley,
 now their shore was nearing.
 From Wā-te and from Fru-te
 their wisest thoughts the king was bent on hearing.
 Both those knights of Denmark
 could hardly this believe,
 Had not their eyes beheld it,
 that Hagen, with followers brave,
 Seeking his daughter Hilda,
 to the river Waal was steering.
 The men who came from Ortlund
 lay happy on the beach, no danger fearing.
 The fair and noble Hilda
 soon heard the wondrous tale,
 Whereat the kindly maiden
 did loudly thus bewail:
 "My father, if he comes hither,
 soon will make such slaughter,
 That none e'er knew the sorrow
 that will be felt by many a wife and daughter."
 "We 'gainst that can guard us,"
 answered the knight Irold:
 "However he may bluster,
 I would not take of gold
 A mountain's weight in barter,
 that day when foes are mated,
 Could I see my uncle Wā-te
 near wild Hagen come, with anger heated."
 Then the lovely maidens
 began to wail and mourn.
 The ship was tossed and rolling,
 now by the west wind borne,
 With warriors filled and crowded,
 near to Waal, the river.
 They there, in heavy fighting,
 soon found a blood-stained resting-place forever.
 Wā-te bade that Hilda
 on board a ship should stay.
 To guard the queenly maiden,
 while near the shore it lay,
 On every side all hastily
 men their shields were bearing:
 To keep a watch o'er the ladies,
 there were on board a hundred warriors daring.
 Ready now for battle
 were all who to the strand
 Had brought the lovely Hilda
 from her Irish fatherland,
 Whence they the maid had stolen,
 to her father Hagen's sorrow.
 Many, sound and healthy,
 must sorely fear for their lives before the morrow.
 Hettel was soon heard shouting
 and calling aloud to his men:
 "Be on your guard, brave fighters!
 Who never gold did gain,
 To him it shall be measured,
 in handfuls, without weighing.
 Let this be not forgotten,—
 that now your Irish foes you may be slaying."
 Bearing then their weapons,
 down they rushed to the sand;
 Stirred with warlike bustle
 was all the Waalisch strand.
 Thither to King Hettel
 flocked his champions daring;
 Friends as well as foemen
 soon towards the self-same spot were faring.

Now had Hagen also
 reached the sandy shore,
 And men at him were hurling
 the spears they bravely bore:
 Those upon the seashore
 well their lives then guarded
 From the stormy Irish onset;
 but wounds yet all the more their bravery rewarded.
 How seldom would a father
 have wished to send his child
 Where sparks of fire, all-glowing,
 were struck by foemen wild
 Forth from hardened helmets,
 in sight of many a maiden!
 To have sailed with these roving fighters
 did now at last the lovely Hilda sadden.
 By turns they smote each other
 with heavy spears and long;
 Altho' themselves they guarded
 beneath their bucklers strong,
 Yet wounded thro' their hauberks,
 they were gashed and bloody;
 And soon with flowing life-blood
 the waters' depths were deeply stained and ruddy.
 Then to his trusty liegemen
 Hagen called aloud:
 The sea gave back his shouting,—
 truly his strength was good,—
 He bade them help to land him,
 their wounds by them unheeded;
 Glad were they to do it:
 thereby were spears in many hearts imbedded.
 Hagen now drew nearer,
 not far was he from the sand;
 His sword it clattered loudly;
 Hettel, near at hand,
 Was standing by the water,
 on the seashore waiting:
 There, with daring followers,
 deeds he did that praise should aye be meeting.
 Hagen, wild with anger,
 leaped into the wave,
 And to the shore he waded.
 Then on that warrior brave
 Came a shower of lances;
 like snowflakes falling thickly,
 Fast they fell around him,
 shot by the Hegeling foemen, thronging quickly.
 Then from the clash of sword-blades
 a mighty noise arose.
 Those who would slay wild Hagen
 soon beneath his blows
 Were seen to reel and stagger.
 Hettel, the noble fighter,
 Drew near to Hilda's father;
 at this the maiden wept, with tears most bitter.
 It was indeed a wonder,
 as we the tale have heard,
 So strong and brave was Hagen,
 that Hettel, the Hegeling lord,
 Before him held his footing.
 As soon as, wildly fighting,
 They had reached each other,
 their helmets rang beneath the heavy smiting.
 But not so quickly ended
 was yet the stormy fight.
 Soon was Hettel wounded
 by brave King Hagen's might:
 Wâ-te the old of Sturmland,
 with his kin, to Hettel hasted,
 With Irold, too, and Morunc,—
 knights as good as foemen's lands e'er wasted.

Now came the brave old Fru-te
 and Wâ-te with his throng:
 Knights there were a thousand,—
 the press of them was strong.
 Hettel's Hegeling kinsmen,
 well their weapons plying,
 Wounded many foemen;
 on every side stretched low, the men were lying.
 After bravest fighting,
 now had reached the land
 The followers of Hagen;
 then crowded to the sand,
 After his friends so faithful,
 a host from Ireland's borders.
 Soon were helmets shattered:
 grimly they fought to win the maids from their warders.
 Hagen saw then near him
 Hettel, the youthful knight:
 Many strong and stalwart
 were shorn of strength outright,
 Both by those from Daneland
 and the Hegeling lieges:
 Now to meet wild Hagen
 every one old Wâ-te loud beseeches.
 Then, by his strength, King Hagen
 broke thro' the crowd a path,
 And with his sword hewed boldly;
 well he wreaked his wrath,
 Because his much-loved daughter
 from him by craft was taken;
 Coats of mail lay fallen:
 the wrongs of Hagen hate in him did waken.
 He might not quench his anger
 with the sword alone;
 By the thrust of his heavy long-spear
 soon were overthrown
 Many a knight most daring:
 never the tale was given
 By these unto their kinsmen,
 of how in the stormy fight their luck had thriven.
 Now came Wâ-te quickly,
 the knight well born and good;
 Soon of his well-loved kinsmen
 he saw the flowing blood,
 Under the slash of broadswords,
 out of their armor dripping:
 Of those who would have helped him,
 five hundred wounded men in death were sleeping.
 Everywhere were gathered
 friends as well as foes,
 All in uproar mingled;
 a mighty din arose.
 Wâ-te and wild Hagen
 rushed on each other madly,
 Whoe'er could shun their pathway
 of all the risk he had fled was thinking gladly.
 Hagen laid on Wâ-te
 many a heavy blow,—
 Well his strength he wielded.
 Their helmets were aglow
 With fiery sparks outflashing,—
 like to brands they glittered;
 Each cleft the other's helmet,
 and ever still, each other's blows they bettered.
 The ground beneath was trembling
 with aged Wâ-te's stroke:
 Scarcely could the maidens
 of his onslaught shun the shock.
 Now the wounds of Hettel
 his faithful friends were binding;
 He then began to ask them
 where his cousin Wâ-te he could be finding.

With Hagen, "of kings the Devil,"
 he found old Wâ-te soon:
 The skill of him of Sturm-land
 to guard himself was shown:
 Brave were both these warriors,
 and oft the tale was spoken
 How Wâ-te the bold and Hagen
 in hardest strife had each his anger wroken.
 Hagen's spear was broken
 erelong on Wâ-te's shield:
 Well in the fight he bore it,
 and strength enough did wield.
 Ne'er on the field of warfare
 did blows of men fall thicker,
 Even of bravest warriors;
 Wâ-te scorned to flinch, or seem the worker.
 Hagen cleft the head-piece
 of Hettel's brave old man,
 The trusty, daring Wâ-te,
 till blood from his helmet ran,
 From out his wounds fast flowing.
 Now the wind blew colder,
 For eventide was nearing;
 the struggling throng in fight but grew the bolder.
 Wâ-te gave back in anger
 each grim and deadly blow,
 Making the blood, like tear-drops,
 on Hagen's breast to flow;
 Strokes he gave his foeman,
 until the sword-blade glittered
 On the bosses of his helmet;
 daylight before his darkened eyesight flittered.
 Wounded, too, was Irold,
 Ortland's champion brave.
 Though many there lay dying
 from the wounds that Hagen gave,
 Yet the blows of Wâ-te
 still did Hagen batter.
 Sorely wept the maidens
 when of so many swords they heard the clatter.
 Now, in fear and sorrow,
 Hilda, the maiden fair,
 Cried unto King Hettel,
 and begged of him to spare
 Her father from old Wâ-te,
 the fight so grimly waging.
 He called for his standard-bearer,
 and bade him lead his men where the strife was raging.
 Then the kingly Hettel
 right well and bravely fought;
 Soon he found old Wâ-te,
 to whom no joy it brought:
 Then Hettel called to Hagen:
 "Let hatred hence be driven;
 So shall it raise your honor,
 if now our friends no more to death be given."
 Hagen shouted loudly,—
 fell indeed was his mood,—
 "Who bids that we be parted?"
 Then cried the warrior good:
 "I bid it, I, King Hettel,
 the Hegelings' lord and master,
 Who for the Lady Hilda
 sent my friends so far, from you to wrest her."
 Then spake the lordly Hagen:
 "Since first to me 'twas told
 How you to win my daughter
 showed yourself so bold,
 This to your name with warriors
 shame has ne'er been doing;
 Clever was the cunning
 to which your winning of my child is owing."

Hettel then sprang nearer,
 as oft by one is done,
 Who thinks to stop the fighting.
 Grim was the mood yet shown
 By the bold and aged Wâ-te;
 but he and Hagen yielded:
 Then with all his followers
 Hagen stepped back, nor longer his weapon wielded.
 Now the lordly Hettel
 his helmet laid aside;
 A truce was loudly called for
 by all, both far and wide;
 'Twas said by Hilda's father
 there was an end of fighting:
 For many a day, the maidens
 had heard no tale their ears so much delighting.
 The men took off the armor
 which they in fight had worn,
 And now at last they rested.
 Many then must mourn
 For wounds, in warfare given,
 whence the blood was welling;
 But many lay there also
 who never more on thoughts of war were dwelling.
 Then stepped forth King Hettel
 and near to Hagen stood,
 And thus he spake to the warrior:
 "Since I well have wooed
 Your lovely daughter Hilda,
 'tis fit that you allow her
 To wear the crown beside me:
 my many well-bred knights will fealty show her."
 Then Hettel sent for Wâ-te,
 of whom he was in need;
 For many years now ended,
 of him it had been said
 That he from some wild woman
 had learned a leech's cunning:
 Wâ-te, forsooth, was skilful
 to heal deep wounds and stanch the life-blood running.
 Wâ-te laid by his weapons;
 his wounds he first had bound.
 Herbs that were good for healing
 by him were quickly found;
 He had a box full costly,
 that in it held a plaster.
 Now the fair Queen Hilda
 besought his help, and at his feet she cast her.
 She said, "My dear friend Wâ-te,
 my father heal, I pray;
 For this, whate'er you ask me,
 I ne'er will say you nay;
 And help his warriors also,
 who in the dust lie bleeding,
 And show your skill to his liegemen
 who stood by him, when he their help was needing.
 "Nor must you be forgetful
 of those of the Hegeling land,
 Who were friends to Hettel;
 wet with their blood is the sand
 On which they now are lying,
 as if a rain were falling:
 Sorrowful tales of their fighting
 for me there ne'er can be an end of telling."
 Then spake the aged Wâ-te:
 "Their wounds I cannot heal,—
 In that I will not meddle,
 until as friends they feel
 Each unto the other,—
 Hagen brave and knightly,
 And Hettel, my lord and master;
 till then shall I withhold my skill most rightly."

The high-born maiden answered:
 "This I may not dare
 To ask of the king, my father;
 his tears I did not spare,
 And now have not the boldness
 to bring to him my greeting;
 Both he and all his kinsmen
 I fear would now my love with scorn be meeting."
 Then 'twas asked of Hagen:
 "My lord, may this now be,
 That it would not stir your anger
 your daughter here to see,
 The youthful, queenly Hilda?
 If you for this are willing,
 She will come most gladly,
 and soon your many wounds will help in healing."
 "Gladly will I see her,
 whatever she has done;
 To me will she be welcome:
 why should I her disown,
 Here in a land of foemen,
 nor take her greeting kindly?
 To me and to my daughter,
 King Hettel must atone for deeds unfriendly."
 Horant, the knight from Daneland,
 led her by the hand,
 And with him went brave Fru-te,
 to where the king did stand;
 One maiden only with them
 looked on Hagen wounded.
 For friends did Hilda sorrow,
 though Hettel's love for her was all unbounded.
 On Hildeburg and Hilda
 when Hagen now did look,
 Then, from his seat upspringing,
 thus he quickly spoke:
 "Welcome be thou, my daughter,
 Hilda, most noble lady!
 I cannot leave unspoken
 the greeting warm which I to give am ready."
 His daughter he allowed not
 the care of his wounds to take;
 While Wâ-te these was binding
 he bade the maids step back,—
 The youthful high-born ladies.
 Wâ-te's wish was the stronger
 To heal her father quickly,
 that so his daughter there might weep no longer.
 Healed with plants and herbage
 and many a far-sought weed,
 From all his pain did Hagen
 feel himself now freed;
 They eased his hurts with plaster,
 and when again the maiden
 Turned to see her father,
 she found him well, with aches no longer laden.
 Wâ-te, the healing-master,
 made haste,—no time he lost;
 He hoped to gain such riches
 among this wounded host,
 That scarce could they by camels
 be carried to his dwelling.
 A skill so great and wondrous
 never, that I have heard, have men been telling.
 First he healed King Hettel,
 the lord of the Hegeling land;
 Then all he saw there wounded
 he helped by his skilful hand.
 Those in the care of others
 still with pain did sicken;
 But they, when nursed by Wâ-te,
 were turned to life, tho' they by death were stricken.

There would they no longer
 let the maidens stay.
 Hagen said to Hilda:
 "Elsewhere must we to-day
 Find us rest and shelter;
 while others must not idly
 Leave the dead thus lying,
 who burial scarce can wait, here scattered widely."
 Hettel begged King Hagen
 with him to his home to go;
 Though loath, to this he yielded,
 as soon as he came to know
 That he, the king of the Hegelings,
 of many lands was owner:
 Hagen then with his daughter
 went with him to his home, and there had honor.
 The youthful knights were singing,
 as they left the field.
 Happy then were the living;
 but, never to be healed,
 They behind were leaving
 three hundred dead and dying,
 The rich and poor together,
 slashed with the sword, and pitifully lying.
 Then the war-worn fighters
 through the land went home;
 All who there were dwelling
 were blithe to see them come:
 But the kinsmen of the warriors
 who in death lay sleeping
 Were slow their hearts to gladden;
 they for kindred slain long time were weeping.
 Hettel and Hilda with him
 took their homeward way.
 Many, bereft of fathers,
 sorely wept that day,
 Whose after life was happy.
 The mighty Hettel later
 Crowned the fair young Hilda;
 by this the Hegeling name became the greater.
 Hettel now had thriven,—
 his suit he well did gain.
 Old and young together
 with swords at court were seen,
 As were the guests of Hagen who from the ships came kindly.
 The wedding of his daughter
 was highly praised by Hagen, now grown friendly.
 Then with what great honor
 to the bridal seat was led
 That high-born, lovely lady!
 Moreover, it is said
 That full five hundred liegemen
 then at court were knighted.
 Fru-te the wise from Denmark
 to guard King Hettel's wealth was thought well fitted.
 The riches of King Hettel
 by Hagen now were seen;
 The tale had erst been told him
 by many of Hettel's kin,
 That over seven principedoms
 well his sway had thriven.
 All the poor there with them
 were home in gladness sent, and lodgings given.
 Hettel gave rich clothing
 to Ireland's warriors brave;
 Bright-red gold and silver,
 and horses, too, he gave.
 The whole they scarce could carry,
 as they homeward wended:
 Thus good friends he won him,
 and this for Hilda in highest praises ended.
 Upon the twelfth day's morning
 they left King Hettel's land.

The horses bred in Denmark
 led they out on the sand;
 Each his mane, thick hanging,
 down to his hoofs was shaking.
 The guests from afar were happy
 that they King Hettel's friendship had been making.
 Grooms and also stewards
 with Hagen then did ride,
 With cup-bearers and carvers.
 Ne'er, in his greatest pride,
 In his home and kingdom,
 had he been served so truly.
 The crown was worn by Hilda,
 and Hagen's heart with bliss was brimming fully.
 Food as well as lodgings
 they found upon their road;
 On Hagen and his followers
 all men their care bestowed:
 So to their homes most gladly
 they the tale did carry
 Of how the friends of Hettel
 in showing them all kindness ne'er were weary.
 Hagen greeted Hildeburg,
 and clasped her in his arms;
 He said, "Watch over Hilda
 for the love your bosom warms.
 So great a throng of followers
 at times a woman dazes;
 Care for her so kindly
 that of your worth all men shall speak with praises."
 "My lord, that will I gladly:
 to you has much been told
 Of the woes that with her mother
 I bore in days of old;
 And I for years my friendship
 for her did never loosen;
 Her for miles I followed
 ere for a lover you by her were chosen."
 Hagen bade the others
 their way to court to take;
 Never then could the maidens
 an end of weeping make:
 Now by the hand he took them,
 and to Hettel they were given;
 He asked for them his kindness,
 since from their homes they sadly had been riven.
 Then said he to his daughter:
 "So well the crown now wear,
 That neither I nor your mother
 the tale shall ever hear
 That men ill-will do bear you.
 High your lot has raised you,
 And you of blame were worthy,
 if when men spoke your name they never praised you."
 Low bowed to the king wild Hagen,
 and kissed his child again.
 Neither by him nor his followers
 ever more was seen
 The kingdom of the Hegeling:
 too far away was their dwelling.
 Back to his home in Ballian,
 in his trusty ships, King Hagen soon was sailing.
 When he had reached his castle,
 and sat with the queen alone,
 The mother of fair Hilda,
 Hagen was free to own
 That none to win his daughter
 more fitly could have pleaded;
 And if he had yet others,
 he fain to the Hegeling land would send them to be wedded.
 Hilda for this gave praises
 to her master, Christ the Lord:

"That I of my dear daughter
 such happy news have heard
 Fills my heart with gladness,
 and with bliss o'erflowing.
 How fares it with her followers,
 and Hildeburg, who long her love was showing?"
 Then spake the kingly Hagen:
 "Now in their land and home
 All of them are happy;
 great hath our child become;
 Ne'er, with us, were her maidens
 clothed in such fine dresses.
 There we now must leave them:
 for her were many breastplates hacked to pieces."

Tale the Ninth. HOW GUDRUN WAS SOUGHT BY SIEGFRIED.

We speak no more of Hagen.
 A word may now be told
 About King Hettel's kinsmen:
 they who land did hold
 Ever owed him fealty
 for these and for their castles;
 To court they all came often
 when Hettel and Hilda sent to call their vassals.
 Wā-te went to Sturmland,
 Morunc to Nifland rode;
 Horant, prince of Denmark,
 led his warriors good
 To Givers, by the seashore,
 where as lord they held him;
 There their homes they guarded,
 and many, far and wide, their master called him.
 With mighty sway in Ortland
 Irold had his seat;
 Its lands he held of Hettel;
 so, as a vassal meet,
 Near and far to serve him,
 his duty was the greater:
 The king was brave and worthy;
 and ne'er for a lord of lands was known a better.
 If ever in any kingdom
 Hettel heard them speak
 Of a fair and well-born maiden,
 her he sought to take
 Into his home and castle,
 as handmaid to his lady:
 Whatever Hilda wished for,
 to help wild Hagen's child they all were ready.
 The king, with his wife beside him,
 was happy on the throne;
 Their life was ever blissful.
 To all in the land 'twas known
 That better far and dearer
 than all on earth he thought her.
 Never by all his kinsmen
 a lovelier could be found, where'er they sought her.
 Within seven years thereafter
 Hettel, in stormy fight,
 Thrice to his foes gave battle.
 They who, day and night,
 To wrong his name and honor
 did their utmost gladly,
 Now by the knightly Hettel
 found themselves brought low and chastened sadly.
 His castles he did strengthen,
 and peace he gave to his land,
 As well a king befitteth:
 such were the deeds of his hand,
 That never in any kingdom,
 when his name was spoken,

Was it said he was faint-hearted.
 The praise of all did well his worth betoken.
 While, with name so worthy,
 Hettel held the throne,
 Wâ-te, the man of wisdom,
 never left undone
 His duty to his master,
 to see him three times yearly;
 Truly he was faithful,
 far and near, to the lord he held so dearly.
 Horant, the lord from Denmark,
 to court not seldom rode;
 Costly gems and clothing
 on the maids he there bestowed,
 With gold and silken raiment,
 meet for women's wearing:
 He from Daneland brought them,
 and to all who wished was he of gifts unsparing.
 The service true and steady
 that the liegemen of the king
 Gave to the lordly Hettel
 honor to him did bring.
 Praised was he for knighthood
 more than any other:
 This Hilda also furthered,
 a queen herself, and child of a queenly mother.
 Hilda, Hagen's daughter,
 children two did bear
 Unto her lord, King Hettel:
 to bring them up with care
 His faithful friends were bidden.
 Soon among his vassals
 Were the tidings bruited
 that an heir no more was lacking for his lands and castles.
 One became a warrior,
 Ortwin was his name;
 To Wâ-te he was trusted.
 It was the teacher's aim
 That he from early boyhood
 should his thoughts be turning
 To all things good and worthy;
 to be a trusty knight he thus was learning.
 The very comely daughter
 of Hilda and the king
 Was called Gu-drun the lovely:
 from the land of the Hegeling
 To Denmark she was carried,
 to be in her kinsmen's wardship.
 Thus they helped King Hettel,
 and this they never felt to be a hardship.
 When the maid grew older,
 her shape became so fair
 That neither man nor woman
 to praise her could forbear:
 Far from the maiden's birthplace,
 all her worth were telling.
 Gu-drun her kinsfolk called her,
 in the Danish land where now she had her dwelling.
 That age she now was reaching
 when, had she been a man,
 A sword she might have wielded.
 Many a prince was fain
 To wed the lovely maiden,
 and sought her love and favor;
 But many came a-wooing
 who soon their hopes must lose, and win her never.
 However fair was Hilda,
 Hettel's lovely wife,
 Yet was Gu-drun more lovely,
 and fair beyond belief;
 More fair than the early Hilda,
 erst to Ireland carried.

Above all other women
 Gu-drun was praised, ere yet the maid was married.
 Her father scorned to give her
 to the king of Alzabé;
 When he heard he could not win her
 to him 'twas a sorry day.
 He held himself most highly
 for all his kingly graces,
 And thought there could be no one
 whose deeds, like his, were worthy of men's praises.
 Both brave he was and daring,
 and from the Moorland came:
 He was known afar and widely,
 Siegfried was his name;
 A king was he full mighty
 over vassals seven.
 He sued for Hilda's daughter,
 such tales of her lofty worth to him were given.
 He, with his faithful liegemen
 from far Icaria's strand,
 Won many costly prizes
 there in Hettel's land:
 His strong and doughty warriors,
 in sight of ladies seated
 Before King Hettel's castle,
 in games of knighthood often there were mated.
 When Hilda and her daughter
 passed the hall within,
 Before the house of Wigaleis
 there rose a mighty din
 From warriors of the Moorland,
 who, all boldly dashing,
 Rode in the sight of the women;
 oft of spears and shields was heard the clashing.
 Never could knight in tilting
 better in this behave.
 A friendly will she bore him,
 and oft kind words she gave,
 Though he was brown to look on,
 and in hue was dusky even.
 He for her love was yearning,
 yet for a wife she ne'er to him was given.
 This pained him beyond measure,
 and truly he was wroth
 That he from far had ridden,
 yet gave she not her troth.
 To burn the land of Hettel
 then did he threaten madly:
 His followers from Moorland,
 when now his hopes were lost, were mourning sadly.
 From him was the maid withhelden
 by Hettel's lofty pride;
 And now their loving friendship
 was ended on either side.
 Then swore the Moor that never
 he his hate would slacken,
 And that the grudge he bore him,
 whate'er befell, should never be forsaken.
 Then from the land of the Hegeling
 rode they all away.
 When many years were ended,
 there came at last a day
 When by a knight most worthy
 was bitter sorrow tasted;
 Then the foes of Herwic
 did him the worst they could, nor in it rested.

Tale the Tenth. HOW HARTMUT SENT TO WOO GUDRUN.

Now in the land of Normandy
 the tale was widely told,

That never fairer maiden
 did any man behold
 Than was King Hettel's daughter,
 Gu-drun, the high-born lady.
 A king, whose name was Hartmut,
 to her then turned his love, to woo her ready.
 Gerlind, Hartmut's mother,
 her wish to him made known,
 That he should woo the maiden;
 her word he followed soon.
 First they sent for his father,
 when they of this had spoken;
 He bore the name of Ludwig,
 and in Norman lands he wore the kingly token.
 Then the aged father
 rode to see his son.
 Of the end that he was seeking
 had Ludwig knowledge won;
 But when to him he hearkened,
 and learned his wishes wholly,
 Evil he foreboded,
 yet still the youth's fond hopes upheld he fully.
 "Who tells you," said King Ludwig,
 "she is so very fair?
 Tho' she all lands were owning,
 the home is not so near,
 Wherein the maid is dwelling,
 that we should go a-wooing;
 If we sent our men before us
 to ask her love, their task they would soon be ruing."
 Then did Hartmut answer:
 "For me 'tis not too far;
 Whene'er the lord of a kingdom
 no pain or toil doth spare
 To win a wife and riches,
 he gains a life-long blessing.
 My wish, I pray you, follow;
 let men be sent, that they my suit be pressing."
 Then spake his mother, Gerlind,
 of Normandy the queen:
 "Letters must now be written;
 let clothes, the best e'er seen,
 With gold, to those be given
 upon your errand speeding;
 They, too, must learn the roadways
 that towards the home of fair Gu-drun are leading."
 Then spake again King Ludwig:
 "Know you not full well
 That Hilda, the maiden's mother,
 did erst in Ireland dwell?
 And know you not what happened
 to many a one who sought her?
 Her kin are proud and lofty,
 and now will scorn the love we shall have brought her."
 Then young Hartmut answered:
 "Tho' with a warlike band
 I afar must seek her,
 over sea and land,
 That shall I do most willingly:
 my heart to her is given,
 And never will I rest me
 till I for Hilda's daughter happily have striven."
 "Gladly will I help you,"
 King Ludwig then did say:
 "Let this now make you happy;
 erelong, upon the way
 I'll send twelve sumpter-horses
 bearing silver treasure;
 That when they hear our errand,
 our wealth and worth they may more rightly measure."
 By Hartmut then were chosen
 sixty men, to send

To woo the fair young maiden,
 and help to him to lend;
 With food and clothing also
 well were they outfitted,
 And on the road well guided:
 Ludwig was wise, and was in this foresighted.
 When everything was ready
 that soon the men would need,
 Then were letters written,
 sealed, and given with speed,
 Both by brave young Hartmut
 and his queenly mother.
 Then from home they started;
 so proud a throng there never was another.
 Fast they rode and steadily
 for many a day and night,
 Until the land they sought for
 came at last in sight,
 And they might tell the errand
 they were thither bringing.
 Long was Hartmut waiting,
 while love and care were in his heart upspringing.
 Over land and rivers
 they took their toilsome way,
 As far as in days a hundred
 a pasturing herd may stray,
 Until the land of the Hegelings
 lay before them stretching.
 Their steeds were worn and weary
 ere they gave the letters they were fetching.
 At last they far had ridden,
 and to the sea had come,
 Upon the shores of Denmark:
 sadly they long did roam,
 Before they reached the kingdom,
 and its lord did know them;
 Now they begged for guidance,
 and men were bid the nearest way to show them.
 The news was given to Horant,
 the knight well-bred and bold;
 Now asked the errand-bearers,
 and the truth to them was told,
 About King Hettel and Hilda,
 and all they had been hearing.
 They saw the men of Hettel
 coming in throngs, their shields and weapons bearing.
 Horant, lord of Daneland,
 then to his liegemen spake,
 And bade for the errand-bearers
 a safeguard now to make,
 And that the men of Hartmut
 should be by them well guided
 To the court of his lord, King Hettel;
 they grudged no toil, and well his bidding heeded.
 When thro' the Hegeling kingdom
 the heralds took their way,
 So lordly was their bearing,
 that often men did say:
 "These folk are rich and mighty,
 whatever they are seeking."
 The news to the king was carried,
 and soon to him all men the tale were speaking.
 To all the guests from Normandy
 were lodgings given there;
 The king now bade his liegemen
 to wait on them with care.
 He knew not yet their errand,
 and why to him they had ridden;
 But on the twelfth day, early,
 young Hartmut's men before the king were bidden.
 An earl there was among them;
 how well his breeding showed!

Upon their clothing also
 were praises high bestowed;
 They rode the best of horses
 on which men e'er were seated,
 And before the king they gathered,
 in fairest guise, that well they might be greeted.
 The king gave kindly welcome,
 as also did his men,
 Until their wooing errand
 was unto him made plain:
 Then were they ill-treated,
 and knew the king's hard feeling.
 I ween the mighty Hettel
 to grant young Hartmut's wish would ne'er be willing.
 One who in that was skilful
 to the king the letters read;
 But he was greatly angered
 that they to court were led
 By the good and upright Horant,
 a knight so brave and noble;
 And, had they not his friendship,
 they had not left the king without more trouble.
 Then spake to them King Hettel:
 "No good to you 'twill bring
 That you were sent a-wooing
 by Hartmut, your lord and king.
 To pay for this full dearly
 you may well be fearing;
 Your kingly master's wishes
 both I and Lady Hilda are wroth at hearing."
 One among them answered:
 "Hartmut makes it known
 That much he loves the maiden;
 and if to wear the crown
 In Normandy she deigneth,
 before his friends there living,
 That he, a knight all spotless,
 will rightly earn the love she shall be giving."
 Then quoth the Lady Hilda:
 "How can she be his wife?
 A hundred and three of his castles
 his father held in fief,
 Within the land of Cardigan,
 from Hagen, my noble sire;
 It ill becomes my kinsmen
 to be King Ludwig's vassals, or owe him hire.
 "Ludwig dwelt in Scotland,
 and there it erst befell
 That a brother of King Otto
 did wrong to Ludwig deal:
 Both were Hagen's vassals,
 and of him their lands had taken;
 And thus my father's friendship
 for him was lost, and hate instead did waken.
 "Say you now to Hartmut
 she ne'er his wife shall be.
 Your lord is not so worthy
 that he to boast is free,
 That he doth love my daughter,
 and she doth not disdain him;
 Bid him elsewhere be looking,
 if he be fain a queen for his land to gain him."
 The heralds' hearts were heavy;
 'twas not for their good name
 That they, for miles full many,
 in sorrow and in shame,
 Back to their homes in Normandy
 this news must carry sadly.
 Hartmut, as well as Ludwig,
 was vexed that they herein were foiled so badly.
 Forthwith to them said Hartmut:
 "Tell me now the truth,

The grand-daughter of Hagen
 have you seen, forsooth?
 Is the maid, Gu-drun, as lovely
 as men have here been saying?
 May God bring shame to Hettel,
 that he my suit with such ill-will is paying!"
 Then the earl thus answered:
 "This can I truly say,—
 Whoe'er shall see the maiden
 must feel her charms and sway;
 Above all maids and women,
 her worth is past the telling."
 Then quoth the kingly Hartmut:
 "To live without her ne'er shall I be willing."
 Whereon his mother, Gerlind,
 sadly thus did say,
 With tears her lot bewailing:
 "My son, oh, lack-a-day!
 Alas that e'er the heralds
 to win the maiden started!
 If we at home had kept them,
 e'en to this day had I been still light-hearted."

Tale the Eleventh. HOW HERWIC SENT TO SEEK GUDRUN AND HOW HARTMUT CAME HIMSELF.

Hartmut left his wooing
 to wait for many a year.
 Soon a tale was bruited
 ('twas true what men did hear)
 Of one whose name was Herwic,
 a king as yet but youthful;
 Often his worth was spoken,
 and men yet speak of him with praises truthful.
 He began his wooing,
 trusting the lovely maid
 Would take him for her lover;
 long his hopes he fed,
 And much he toiled to win her,
 both with love and riches:
 But tho' the maid was willing,
 her father, Hettel, he in vain beseeches.
 Though Herwic long was striving,
 and men to seek her rode,
 Yet was his wooing slighted;
 for this his wrath he showed.
 The heart of proud young Herwic
 by heavy care was fettered;
 Freely his love he gave her,
 and thought a life with her could not be bettered.
 There came at length a morning
 when it to them befell
 That in the Hegeling kingdom
 both knights and maids as well,
 With many lovely ladies,
 his coming never fearing,
 Before them saw bold Hartmut;
 Hettel could not believe he'd be so daring.
 From this did endless evil
 soon come upon the land:
 These guests high-born and worthy
 were yet an unknown band;
 Hartmut and his kinsmen
 their host's goodwill were sharing,
 And he the hope still harbored
 that the maid would yet the crown with him be wearing.
 Now before Queen Hilda
 by ladies he was seen
 To stand with lofty breeding,
 and with a stately mien.
 There the proud young Hartmut
 wore a look so knightly,

That he the love of ladies
 well might ask, and 'twould be granted rightly.
 Well-grown was he in body,
 fair he was and bold,
 Kind as well as lordly.
 Why I ne'er was told
 Had Hettel and Queen Hilda
 from him withheld their daughter,
 When he had thought to woo her;
 wroth was he to be scorned when now he sought her.
 Of her his heart had longed for
 he now had gained the sight;
 There oft were stolen glances
 between Gu-drun and the knight.
 He made it known to the maiden,
 by speech from others hidden,
 That he was young King Hartmut,
 and from the Norman land had lately ridden.
 Then she told her wooer
 the pain to her it gave;
 And tho' she wished he ever
 a happy life might have,
 Yet from her father's kingdom
 she begged him now to hasten,
 For in the land of Hettel
 was his life at risk, and this would never lessen.
 She looked on him so kindly
 that now her heart was warned
 That he should stay no longer,
 for here his suit was spurned.
 Friendly was she to Hartmut,
 who her love so wanted,
 But his hopes she little heeded,
 and while he wooed, not much to him she granted.
 At last her well-bred lover
 from Hettel's land must go;
 He bore upon his shoulders
 a heavy load of woe:
 To wreak his wrath on Hettel
 would he now be choosing,
 Yet feared he, if he harmed him,
 that he the maiden's love would then be losing.
 'Twas thus the daring Hartmut
 the Hegeling kingdom left;
 Much he felt of sadness,
 though not of hope bereft.
 He knew not yet the ending
 of his wooing of the maiden;
 For the sake of her, thereafter,
 were helmets cleft, and many sorrow-laden.
 When he had reached his kingdom,
 and home again did turn,
 Where dwelt his father and mother,
 Hartmut, grim and stern,
 For war with Hettel longing,
 began to make him ready.
 Gerlind, the old she-devil,
 at all times spurred him on with hatred steady.

Tale the Twelfth. HOW HERWIC MADE WAR ON HETTEL, AND HOW GUDRUN WAS BETROTHED TO HIM.

What more befell young Hartmut
 we now forbear to say.
 Upon the brave King Herwic
 a weight of sorrow lay,
 As great as that of Hartmut,
 for love of the high-born lady.
 He, with all his kinsmen,
 to woo Gu-drun, as best they might, made ready.
 Near her he was dwelling,
 and there he held his land.

A thousand times tho' daily
 he should send to ask her hand,
 Ever would his wooing
 be met with scorn and flouting;
 But though he now was thwarted,
 later on her, as his wife, he was fondly doting.
 The king forbade him longer
 to woo Gu-drun, his child;
 Then sent he word in anger
 that never would he yield:
 Hettel should see him coming,
 with men and shields, a-wooing;
 And this to him and Hilda
 would evil bring, that they would long be ruing.
 Whose rede it was I know not,
 but thrice a thousand men,
 Showing thus their friendship,
 were soon with Herwic seen.
 By them against the Hegelings
 harm erelong was plotted
 For the sake of the lovely maiden
 he fondly hoped would be to him allotted.
 Those who came from Sturmland
 the tale would not believe,
 To those from Denmark also
 none the tidings gave;
 But Irold, lord of Orland,
 soon the word was hearing
 That now the daring Herwic
 for warlike ends to Hettel's home was faring.
 When 'twas known to Hettel
 that Herwic, fearing naught,
 E'en now the land was nearing,
 and followers with him brought,
 Then asked he of his kinsmen,
 and of the queen, his lady:
 "What say you to the tidings?
 I hear that guests to our home have come already."
 She said: "What can I answer,
 but that 'tis well and right,
 When one such deeds is doing
 as befit a worthy knight,
 Tho' good or ill it bring us,
 praise should they be earning.
 Can aught amiss befall him?
 Herwic is wise, and aye for honor yearning."
 His queenly wife said further:
 "Yet must we beware,
 That he may bring no burden
 unto our kinsmen here.
 This have many told me,—
 'tis for the sake of your daughter
 That he with many warriors
 has come into your borders, o'er the water."
 Hettel with his kinsmen
 had waited a little too long:
 The wrath of young King Herwic
 now had waxen strong.
 In the cool of the early morning,
 he, with followers daring,
 Reached King Hettel's castle,
 and later with his men the strife was sharing.
 While yet the men were sleeping
 within King Hettel's halls,
 The watchman from the castle
 down to them loudly calls:
 "Up from your rest now, quickly!
 Arm yourselves and listen!
 Foes from abroad are coming!
 E'en now, on their way, I see the helmets glisten."
 From off their beds upsprang they,
 no longer dared they lie;

Whoe'er there was among them,
 in rank or low or high,
 Must bear a heavy burden,
 for life and honor caring.
 Thus the young King Herwic
 strove for a wife, the storm of warfare daring.
 Hettel and Queen Hilda
 had now to the window come:
 Men they saw with Herwic,
 brought from a far-off home
 Among the hills of Galeis,
 where they had their dwelling;
 These the mighty Morunc
 in Waleis knew, and oft of them was telling.
 The foes were seen by Hettel,
 thronging towards the gate.
 Well Gu-drun's brave father
 must fear to meet their hate,
 As they were rushing onward,
 tho' high his heart was swelling:
 Much they roused his anger,
 but them his burghers helped erelong in quelling.
 Armed to guard the castle
 were a hundred men or more;
 Hettel himself fought boldly,
 goodwill for this he bore.
 His lieges all were doughty,
 but yet they could not save him;
 Hard were the blows for Hettel,
 that in the fight the brave young Herwic gave him.
 Upon his foeman's helmet
 whizzing blasts, fire-hot,
 Were struck by the daring Herwic.
 The many blows he smote
 Gu-drun now saw with wonder,
 her eyes upon him feeding:
 He seemed a knight most worthy,
 and love she felt, e'en though her heart was bleeding.
 Hettel bore his weapon
 grimly 'gainst his foe;
 Of strength no less than riches
 he had, in truth, enow:
 But soon he did unwisely,
 he pressed on him too nearly,
 And those within the castle
 saw the fight between them all too clearly.
 The sore-beleaguered dwellers
 the gates would gladly shut;
 But now their losses told them
 that this would nothing boot:
 Friends as well as foemen
 near the gates were thronging,
 And great was the hope of Herwic
 to win the maid for whom his heart was longing.
 Hettel then and Herwic
 against each other dashed,
 In sight of all their followers;
 flames shot out and flashed
 On the bosses of the bucklers
 which they both were wearing:
 But little while it lasted,
 ere knowledge of each other they were sharing.
 When Hettel saw in Herwic
 a warrior so proud,
 And one so truly daring,
 he cried to all aloud:
 "Should any here forbid me
 that I with him be friendly,
 He knows the knight but little;
 deadly wounds he hews, in mood unkindly."
 Gu-drun, the lovely maiden,
 looked on, and heard the din.

Luck is round and rolling,
 like a ball, I ween;
 And since to end the fighting
 to her it was not given,
 She hoped that, when 'twas over,
 her father and his foe would find their strength was even.
 She then began to call to him,
 from out the palace hall:
 "Hettel, my noble father,
 behold how blood doth fall,
 From out the hauberks flowing!
 Everywhere about us
 The walls therewith are spattered!
 A neighbor ill is Herwic, and harm hath wrought us.
 "If you would grant my wishes,
 you now will be at peace;
 Give rest to heart from anger,
 and let your fighting cease,
 Till I can ask of Herwic,
 and he to us be telling,
 About his land and kingdom,
 and where his nearest kinsmen have their dwelling."
 Then said the proud young Herwic:
 "Not yet may peace begin,
 Unless without my weapons
 I your love may win.
 If rest a while be granted,
 the knowledge you are seeking
 I then will give you freely,
 and of my kinsmen will to you be speaking."
 Now, for love of the maiden,
 the strife did they forego.
 Then shook they off their armor,
 each battle-weary foe,
 And bathed in running waters,
 from rusty stains to free them.
 They soon were cheered and rested,
 and none could grudge in happy mood to see them.
 A hundred knights with Herwic
 went from the field to find
 Gu-drun, the Hegeling maiden,
 still wavering in her mind.
 She, with other ladies,
 gave him welcome kindly;
 But the worthy, high-born Herwic
 hardly dared to think their wishes friendly.
 The fair and comely maiden
 showed the guests their seats;
 The bravery of Herwic
 erelong with love she meets:
 His high and noble breeding
 earned him kindest greeting.
 'Twas thought Gu-drun and Hilda
 should grant his suit, without a longer waiting.
 To the ladies then spake Herwic:
 "I oft have heard it said
 That you of me speak lightly,
 and think me lowly bred:
 Your scorn may bring you sorrow,
 after all my striving;
 The rich may from the poorest
 a blessing gain, the while with them they're living."
 She said: "Where is the maiden
 who could behold with scorn
 A knight who strove so bravely,
 or from his love could turn?
 Believe me," said the maiden,
 "I do not hold you lightly;
 Never maid more kindly
 has looked on you, or prized your worth more rightly.
 "If now my friends and kindred
 leave for this will give,

Even as you wish it,
 with you I will gladly live.”
 Then with fondest glances
 he her eye was seeking:
 In her heart she bore him,
 and owned the truth to all, no falsehood speaking.
 The brave and happy Herwic
 begged that he might dare
 To woo the fair young maiden.
 Now to grant his prayer
 Were Hettel and Hilda ready;
 but first must they be knowing
 Whether Gu-drun, their daughter,
 was glad or sorry for the kingly Herwic’s wooing.
 Herwic was quick in learning
 how kindly was her mood:
 And now the brave young warrior
 before the maiden stood,
 In shape as fair and comely
 as if the hand of a master
 On a white wall had drawn him:
 while there he stood her love but grew the faster.
 “If you your love will give me,”
 he said, “most lovely maid,
 Then shall my truest worship
 to you be ever paid;
 Throughout my lands and castles
 to you there shall be given
 My kinsmen’s faithful service,
 and ne’er shall I repent that thus I’ve striven.”
 She said: “I give you freely
 the love for which you pray;
 By all your toils and daring
 you well have earned to-day
 That you and all my kindred
 foes shall be no longer.
 Now none can make me sorrow,
 and every day our bliss shall grow the stronger.”
 Then they sent for Hettel:
 thus ended was the fight.
 Soon came he to his daughter;
 and many a faithful knight
 Followed the king, their master,
 who unto him had ridden
 From all the Hegeling kingdom.
 Thus to the strife a long farewell was bidden.
 Now when Hettel’s kinsmen
 their wish for this did speak,
 Then asked he of his daughter
 if she would gladly take
 Herwic, the knight so noble,
 who in his heart had set her.
 Then said the lovely maiden:
 “There’s not another I could love the better.”
 They then betrothed the maiden
 at once to the knightly king,
 Who in his land would crown her.
 This did gladness bring
 To him, and sorrow likewise:
 ere many years were ended,
 And she to him was wedded,
 good knights in stormy fight their lives defended.
 To take the maiden with him
 Herwic now was fain;
 But this her mother grudged him:
 thereby much woe and pain
 Came upon him later
 from foes as yet unheeded.
 The king was told by Hilda
 that longer time ere she be crowned was needed.
 They thought it best for Herwic
 to leave the maiden there,

While he with other women
 might pass the time elsewhere,
 And wait to wed the lady
 until a year were ended.
 This learned the men of Alzabie:
 to wait so long for her young Herwic ill befriended.

Tale the Thirteenth. HOW SIEGFRIED MADE WAR AGAINST HERWIC.

Siegfried, king of Moorland,
 called for all his men;
 Ships were soon made ready,
 wherever they were seen;
 Then with food and weapons
 to load them it was bidden,
 For war against King Herwic:
 from all but faithful friends his thoughts were hidden.
 A score of wide, strong barges
 bade he to be made.
 I ween they liked it little
 to whom the king now said
 That forthwith unto Sealand
 to fight must they be faring;
 And he would thither hasten
 as soon as, winter o’er, springtide was nearing.
 Eighty thousand warriors
 soon to him had come;
 Of fighting men in Alzabie
 none were left at home.
 Then swore the Moorland princes
 for war to make them ready;
 Some of these still lingered,
 others to follow with the king were speedy.
 Then against the Sealands
 the threat of war he made.
 This roused the wrath of Herwic,
 who well might him upbraid;
 To earn the hate of Siegfried
 wrong had he done him never.
 His marches and his castles
 he bade his men to guard, now more than ever.
 Then he said in sorrow
 to friends who came in haste
 That foes would burn his castles,
 and his lands lay waste:
 All he could give his liegemen,
 that he held but lightly.
 They took their wages gladly;
 that war would bring them riches, hoped they rightly.
 About the gladsome May-time,
 there went across the sea
 Warriors out of Alzabie,
 and eke from Abakie.
 Onward came they proudly,
 as tho’ the world’s end seeking;
 Many now trod boldly
 who in the dust their rest would soon be taking.
 Into the land of Herwic
 they cast the burning brand.
 Then all whom he could gather,
 and all his friends at hand,
 Rode to the field with Herwic.
 Thro’ war-storms grimly driven,
 They with their lives must bargain
 for gold and gems and silver to them given.
 To him, the king of Sealand,
 great ill erelong was wrought.
 A stalwart foeman was he:
 Aha, how well he fought!
 He made the land the richer
 with the dead there lying:

The old in fight grew youthful:
 the strong were slain, who recked not yet of dying.
 Long the fighting lasted,
 till thickly lay the dead:
 Then to the brave King Herwic
 came at last the need
 To flee into his marches,
 for life he there was turning;
 All his lands lay smoking:
 of this to Gu-drun, his lady, sent he warning.
 Now to the land of Hettel
 men at his bidding went:
 Many tears and bitter
 they shed when they were sent
 To find the great King Hettel,
 and the tale to him to carry.
 They were not long in showing
 unto the king their plight so hard and dreary.
 Tho' sad in mood he found them,
 a welcome kind he gave,
 Such as far-off wanderers
 and homeless friends should have.
 He asked if from their homesteads
 they were hither driven,
 When foes their lands had wasted,
 and all their marches had to flames been given.
 Then to him they answered:
 "In sorrow did we leave:
 The faithful men of Herwic,
 from early morn till eve,
 Sell their lives full dearly,
 and well his gifts are earning;
 They fight for name and honor:
 for this at home are many women mourning."
 Then to them said Hettel:
 "To my daughter make it known;
 Whatever she shall wish for
 at once shall that be done.
 If she for vengeance callest
 for the wrongs he wrought you,
 We then will help you gladly,
 and pay him back the ill that he has brought you."
 Before they yet had spoken
 unto the fair young maid,
 Already of her sorrow
 her friends had taken heed.
 The lady had been longing
 to see the heralds hourly;
 Then in haste she sent for,
 the loss of land and honor, mourning sorely.
 When they came before her,
 they found the queenly maid
 Sitting sad, and weeping,—
 faithful love she had;
 She asked them of her lover,
 and how they leave had taken,
 And if he still was living
 when they of late had land and home forsaken.
 Then answered one among them:
 "We left him sound and well;
 But since the day we saw him
 we know not what befell,
 Or how the men of Moorland
 may his home have wasted:
 Mischief they had done him,
 neither from fire and plunder had they rested.
 "Listen, high-born maiden!
 my master's bidding heed:
 He and all his warriors
 are now in sorest need.
 To lose both life and honor
 they are fearing daily;

And now my lord, King Herwic,
 sends to beg your men to his help to rally."
 Gu-drun, the lovely maiden,
 then from her seat upstood;
 The wrongs that had been done her
 she to her father showed:
 She said her men were slaughtered,
 and her castles wasted,
 And told her father, Hettel,
 that to ride to Herwic's help she would he had hasted.
 Then in her arms she pressed him,
 her eyes with weeping wet:
 "Help, O dearest father!
 My woes are all too great,
 Unless your many liegemen,
 with ready hand, are willing
 To help my good friend Herwic:
 none else can end the strife, my sorrow healing."
 "That will I leave to no one,"
 the king did freely say;
 "I will haste to help King Herwic,
 and wait not many a day.
 As well as I am able,
 I will end your sorrow:
 I will call for the aged Wâ-te
 and many other friends, before the morrow.
 "He will bring from Sturmland
 all the men of his lands;
 And when 'tis known by Morunc
 how ill with us it stands,
 Fighters full a thousand
 to bring will he be speedy.
 Our foes shall find out quickly,
 that under helmets we to march are ready.
 "Horant, too, from Denmark
 shall bring upon the way
 Of men full thrice a thousand:
 nor will I rold stay;
 But he will raise his banner,
 and hasten to the slaughter.
 Then, too, thy brother Ortwin
 will come, and all will earn the blessing of my daughter."
 The heralds soon went riding
 whom the maid did send.
 Her friends far off were living,
 but all who help would lend
 To heal the maiden's sorrow
 would honor great be earning;
 Knights would she warmly welcome:
 for this erelong the more to her were turning.
 Hilda, the maiden's mother,
 unto her daughter spake:
 "Whoe'er is quick to help you,
 and now his shield shall take
 To follow with your warriors
 when they to war are faring,
 Whate'er we gain by fighting
 he shall, in truth, henceforth with us be sharing."
 Then the chests were opened;
 men to court soon bore
 Whate'er therein was lying,
 of fighting-gear a store,
 Fast with steel well studded;
 then the knights were laden
 With armor white as silver:
 this made glad the heart of the queenly maiden.
 To full a thousand warriors
 were given clothes and steeds;
 Out of stalls men brought them,
 as oft the horse one leads,
 When, along the highways,
 men to the fight go riding.

Of all the king's good horses
they left but very few at rest abiding.
When from his queenly lady
the king his leave did take,
Both Hilda and her daughter
began to weep for his sake;
But on the knights forth riding
gladly they were gazing,
And said: "May God in heaven
so help the fight that men may you be praising."
After they all were gathered
without the castle gate,
Youths were there heard singing,
hoping for plunder great.
Each thought, by hardest fighting,
to win himself much riches;
But far must they yet be riding,
for long the way to their master's foemen stretches.
On the third morning early
came, at break of day,
The very aged Wā-te
with a thousand to the fray;
And from the Danish kingdom,
as the seventh day was dawning,
Came Horant with four thousand,
to whom the fair Gu-drun had sent her warning.
From out the Waalisch marches
Morunc thither rode;
He ever fought for the ladies,
for the love to them he owed.
Twenty thousand warriors
he brought,—for nought he tarried:
These were all well-weaponed,
and happily rode, while help to the king they carried.
The queenly maiden's brother,
Ortwin, the youthful knight,
Brought across the water,
to help her in the fight,
Forty hundred warriors,
or even a number greater:
Were it known to the men of Alzabie,
well might they have feared to meet him later.
Before they yet could help him,
to Herwic and his men
The strife had now gone badly,
his luck began to wane:
To him and all his followers
was evil sore betiding;
Altho' they struggled bravely,
his foes too near his castle gate were riding.
Great mishaps to Herwic
from Siegfried's kin arose;
For now the gates of the castle
were shattered by their blows.
False friends had made it easy,
and boasts too loudly spoken:
If e'er to such one trusteth,
it worketh him no good, and his hopes are broken.
Now 'twas told to Herwic,
men fast for help had gone.
The foes from fight ne'er rested,
by anger driven on;
From early morn to even,
they oft to the strife were bidden:
But now the friends of Herwic
on every side drew near, nor long lay hidden.
When this the men of Karadie
did learn, they well might fear
That now two kings against them
in the fight should share:
For them it was unlucky
that Hettel now was leading

His many fighters thither;
he from afar had come, to Herwic speeding.
Friends were they to each other;
so both would meet the foe.
These, the men from Moorland,
bold themselves did show:
One saw by all their bearing
they would from none be flying;
Those who with them struggled
by hardest toil must their reward be buying.
Wā-te, the very daring,
with all his knights had come;
Gu-drun, the lovely lady,
had called him from his home
To help her lover, Herwic,
and a host had ridden hither:
Whate'er might now befall them,
later full happy rode they thence together.
Although their foes were heathen,
from out the Moorish land,
They might not back be driven:
one well might understand
That in any earthly kingdom
they were the best and boldest.
To all who came to meet them
they gave a sorry welcome and a shelter coldest.
Herwic, king of Sealand,
his loss would now make good
Upon his foes from Alzabie.
For this must flow the blood
On either side of many;
to friends and kin were given
Wounds full fast and heavy:
to bear his own was hard for Hettel even.
When they had come together
of whom I spoke before,
Bringing all their followers,
gladness they knew no more;
On them were ever resting
heavy care and sorrow
For what the night might bring them.
They thought: "How shall we live to see the morrow?"
Thrice with the Moorish foemen
they strove on the stormy field,
While peace was given the castle,
as knights are wont to yield.
Again with sword and spear-shaft
they the strife would settle:
Peace not yet they wished for,
but wounds the more they got in hard-fought battle.
Nor Herwic's men nor Siegfried's
yet would leave the fight;
They to the last had struggled,
and many a bravest knight
Upon the field lay wounded,
or in death was sleeping.
This was told to the women,
who now began a wild, unmeasured weeping.
How well the daring Wā-te
in battle-storm did fight!
Strong was he and skilful,
and oft the aged knight
Gave to the foe heart-sorrow,
by all the ill he wrought him:
Ever to fight with his warriors,
by the side of the boldest and best, his wishes taught him.
Horant, too, from Denmark,
brave was he enough!
Beneath his hand were shattered
helmets strong and tough;
Ne'er by him 'twas forgotten
to wear his armor shining;

Ill he wrought to many,
 and oft the ranks of his foemen he was thinning.
 The quick and fearless Morunc
 boldly stretched his hand
 Ofttimes beyond his buckler,
 and oft the fight he gained.
 To shun the king of Moorland
 ne'er would he be seeking;
 Upon that king, so mighty,
 he the wrath of Herwic now was wreaking.
 The great and doughty Hettel,
 when that his daughter fair
 Had sent to beg her father
 in Herwic's fight to share,
 That peace at last might follow,
 fought for him not idly:
 If life were dear to any,
 'twere best to shun King Hettel's borders widely.
 Bravely strove King Herwic
 on the field and at the gate;
 None than he fought better.
 His head was often wet,
 Beneath his armor dripping,
 with sweat that fast was oozing.
 In death were many deafened;
 they who would crush him must their lives be losing.
 Wigaleis, the faithful,
 great ill to many wrought.
 Sir Fru-te, too, from Daneland,
 with knightly prowess fought:
 The thanks of all his fellows
 he should of right be sharing;
 He strove where the fight was stormy,
 and none e'er knew an aged knight so daring.
 The lord who came from Ortland,
 Ortwin, brave and young,
 Showed the hand of a warrior;
 it was on many a tongue,
 That never man in warfare
 bore himself more boldly:
 Wounds he gave the deepest,
 and this by none was ever told of coldly.
 For twelve long days of fighting,
 earnestly they strove.
 The men led on by Hettel
 oft their spear-shafts drove
 Thro' their foes' light bucklers,
 as close they met together:
 The fighters proud from Moorland
 sorely rued the day that brought them thither.
 Upon the thirteenth morning,
 ere early mass was said,
 With sorry heart spake Siegfried:
 "How many here lie dead
 Of all our bravest warriors!
 In his lofty wooing
 The king of Sealand also
 here to himself has evil great been doing."
 Then to the men of Karadie
 made he known his will,
 To a stronghold to betake them,
 there their wounds to heal:
 They, with those from Alzabie,
 were earnest to go thither;
 Right glad were these far-riders
 that all in death might not be found together.
 Then to a sheltering castle
 to turn they all began,
 Where onward, fast beside it,
 a wide, deep river ran.
 While they were thither riding,
 fleeing away from danger,

They were still seen fighting
 with those who ne'er would yield their homes to a stranger.
 Now against King Hettel
 the king of Moorland rode:
 Well might one believe it,
 his former warlike mood
 Was but a slight beginning;
 he soon a foe was meeting
 Who many of his kinsmen
 with deep and deadly wounds of late was greeting.
 Hettel, he of the Hegelings,
 and Siegfried, the Moorland king,
 There unto the struggle
 all their strength did bring;
 Shields were hacked to pieces
 by the swords they wielded:
 The mighty lord of Moorland
 to the castle fled, nor to him of Daneland yielded.
 Camps by the men from Denmark
 for themselves were made:
 Then the beleaguered warriors,—
 it cannot be gainsaid,—
 E'er many days were over,
 with care were burdened sadly;
 However good their shelter,
 all would then have been at home more gladly.
 Thus the boastful fighters
 were by the foeman's hand
 Fast held within the stronghold;
 nor was their knightly band
 Now able to give battle,
 although for this yet longing.
 Their castle well they guarded,
 as best they might, wherein they now were thronging.

Tale the Fourteenth. HOW HETTEL SENT TIDINGS FROM HERWIC'S LAND.

Hettel then sent tidings,
 to still their fears at home.
 To the fair and high-born ladies
 men with news did come,
 That unto the old and youthful,
 throughout the stormy fighting,
 Good luck had aye befallen;
 and now, with hope must they for them be waiting.
 He bade his men to tell them
 how Siegfried was besieged,
 While he with all his followers
 war against him waged,
 To help the lord of Sealand,
 loved by Gu-drun, his daughter;
 That all, as they were able,
 daily fought for her, and for him who sought her.
 Hettel's queen, fair Hilda,
 the hope began to have
 That luck would follow Herwic
 and all his warriors brave;
 And, as their worth befitted,
 all might well be speeding.
 Then said Gu-drun: "God grant it,
 that they our friends may back in health be leading."
 By Wâ-te's men from Sturm-land,
 the foes from Alzabie
 And all who came from Moorland
 were kept away from the sea;
 Sadly must they tarry
 within the sheltering castle:
 In Wâ-te and in Fru-te
 foes they had with whom they ill could wrestle.
 Loudly swore King Hettel
 the castle ne'er to leave;

That he and all his followers
 still to the end would strive,
 Till those to him had yielded
 who now the Moor befriended.
 Unwise had been their inroad,
 and this for them one day in sorrow ended.
 Meanwhile the spies of Hartmut,
 whom he had thither sent,
 Tho' little good they looked for,
 from the Norman border went;
 Ever to learn what happened
 they a watch were keeping,
 And from the stormy warfare
 they hoped that Hettel might no gain be reaping.
 Now they saw that Siegfried,
 the Moorland king high-born,
 Was kept within the castle,
 besieged both eve and morn;
 Thence could he sally never,
 and this he knew with sorrow;
 His lands so far were lying,
 he little help from them could hope to borrow.
 The Norman errand-bearers,
 sent forth their watch to make
 By Ludwig and young Hartmut,
 to them now hastened back:
 The happy news they carried,
 and soon at home were giving,
 That Hettel, the king, and Herwic
 were busy now, in warfare ever striving.
 To them the lord of Normandy
 thanks for the tidings gave,
 And asked them: "Can you tell us
 how long those foemen brave,
 The men from the land of Karadie,
 will in Sealand tarry,
 Fighting 'gainst its warriors,
 till they, their wrongs avenged, of war are weary?"
 One of them made answer:
 "The truth you now may hear:
 There they yet must linger
 more than another year.
 Never from their stronghold
 will the Hegelings free them;
 They there so well are guarded,
 that on their homeward way none e'er shall see them."
 Then the knight of Normandy,
 the daring Hartmut, spake:
 "This frees my heart from sorrow,
 and hope in me doth wake!
 If they are now beleaguered,
 then are we well befriended;
 We must to Hegeling hasten,
 ere Hettel's fight with Siegfried shall be ended."
 Ludwig and young Hartmut
 had both the selfsame mind,—
 Had they ten thousand fighters
 whom they at once could find,
 Gu-drun they might lay hold on,
 and to their home might carry,
 Before her father, Hettel,
 came back again from the land where he did tarry.
 Hartmut's mother, Gerlind,
 earnestly gave thought
 To wreak her wrath on Hettel,
 that he to harm be brought,
 Because her dear son Hartmut
 he shamefully had slighted.
 She wished the aged Wä-te
 and Fru-te might be hanged, for the help they plighted.
 Then spake the old she-devil:
 "Good knights, your hire behold!

If you will now ride thither,
 my silver and my gold,
 That will I give you freely,—
 but women shall not share it.
 I care not if Hettel and Hilda
 shall rue their wrong, and ne'er again will dare it."
 Quoth Ludwig, Hartmut's father:
 "We from our Norman land
 Forthwith must make an inroad:
 soon will I have at hand
 Twenty thousand fighters
 whom I for war will gather;
 With these it will be easy
 to seize Gu-drun, and bear her from her father."
 Then spake the youthful Hartmut:
 "Might ever this betide,
 That Hilda's lovely daughter
 I here should see my bride,
 I would not take in barter
 for that a princedom fairest;
 Then might we here together
 pass our lives, each one to the other dearest."
 Busily his followers,
 hour by hour, gave thought
 How they could do his wishes.
 A host King Ludwig brought
 To lead against the Hegelings;
 well were they outfitted.
 How should Hilda know it,
 that soon thereby her welfare would be blighted?
 The wife of Ludwig also
 helped them as she could.
 For this she plotted ever,
 that fair Gu-drun be wooed,
 And, as the bride of Hartmut,
 to Normandy be carried;
 She did her best most busily
 that the maid one day should to her son be married.
 Ludwig said to Hartmut,
 his well belovéd son:
 "Think well, O knight most worthy,
 no toil we now must shun,
 Until our foes are mastered
 and from their lands are driven.
 Reward the guests who help us;
 to our men at home by me shall gifts be given."
 These they soon were sharing,
 all and every one.
 Never yet in Suabia
 gifts so rich were known,
 Of steeds for war or burden,
 saddles, and shields fair shining;
 I ween they were gladly given:
 Ludwig ne'er before such thanks was winning.
 Quickly all made ready
 to start upon their way.
 Sailors were found by Ludwig;
 skilful men were they,
 Who the deep sea-pathways
 knew, and well could follow;
 Hard must they be toiling
 to win their wages high upon the billow.
 Now, in seemly measure,
 fit were they to go.
 Throughout the lands and highways
 soon the news did grow
 That Ludwig and young Hartmut
 home and land were leaving.
 They yet would see much sorrow,
 when they erelong their Hegeling foe were braving.
 When to the shore they had ridden,
 ships were floating there,

That workmen well had builded,
 the knights away to bear;
 Gerlind's gold and riches
 had made them strong and steady.
 Nor Wā-te the old nor Fru-te
 of this knew aught, nor were for their coming ready.
 With three and twenty thousand
 they sailed the waters o'er.
 Now for Gu-drun young Hartmut
 a weight of sorrow bore:
 This, before his followers,
 to hide he was not earnest;
 He hoped to meet King Hettel,
 and him to overcome in strife the sternest.
 As yet they knew not fully
 how they his land could reach.
 To the sons of many a mother
 the raid did sorrow teach.
 Near to the shores of Orland
 the rolling billows bore them,
 Before 'twas known to Hettel:
 now Hilda's castle rose in sight before them.
 The warriors led by Hartmut
 were still twelve miles away;
 Yet had they come already
 over the wide, deep sea,
 Unto the land of the Hegelings,
 and to its shores so nearly
 That castles, towers, and palaces
 in Hilda's town they all could see most clearly.
 Ludwig, king of Normandy,
 bade that on the sand
 They now should drop the anchors;
 he then gave word to land
 To all his men together,
 and bade them do it quickly:
 They now had come so near them,
 they feared the Hegeling bands would gather thickly.
 Then bore they up the weapons,
 with shields and helmets good,
 That they had with them carried
 over the heaving flood:
 They to fight made ready;
 yet they at first bethought them
 To send through the land their runners,
 to learn if friendly helpers might be brought them.

Tale the Fifteenth. HOW HARTMUT CARRIED AWAY GUDRUN.

Now at Hartmut's bidding
 heralds quickly rode
 To where the queenly Hilda
 and her daughter dear abode.
 To them his word they carried,
 that if to wed the maiden
 They should think him worthy,
 her and her mother both it well might gladden.
 If she her love would give him,
 as he had asked before,—
 Ofttimes his heart was heavy
 for the love to her he bore,—
 That he would ever serve her
 so long as he was living,
 And many lands wide-reaching,
 held of his father, would to her be giving.
 But if she would not love him,
 she then would earn his hate;
 He asked of her that kindly
 she his love would meet,
 So that he to his fatherland
 his lovely bride might carry

Without a fight or struggle.
 To hope for this brave Hartmut ne'er was weary.
 Did she gainsay his wooing,
 Hartmut sent this word:
 "I will not be bought with silver,
 albeit a heavy hoard,
 To leave in peace her kingdom;
 she yet shall give me heeding.
 I will show Gu-drun, fair maiden,
 brave knights enough, to be for her eyes fine feeding!"
 "Further, good errand-bearers,
 this say to her from me:
 I ne'er will leave her borders
 to sail on the wide, deep sea;
 Better will I think it
 to be hewn in pieces even,
 Unless the Hegeling maiden
 will follow me hence, to me in wedlock given.
 "But, should she scorn me wholly,
 and never my bride will be,
 Then me, with my daring fighters,
 riding here she will see.
 Before the Hegeling castle
 I will then leave lying
 Twenty thousand warriors,
 on both sides of the roadway, dead or dying.
 "Since by the craft of Wigaleis
 King Hettel has been led,
 And by the aged Wā-te,
 hither our way we've made
 Into the Hegeling kingdom,
 time and toil thus spending;
 For this shall many be fatherless,
 and glad shall I be of the whole to make an ending."
 Those sent forth by Hartmut
 fast on their way did ride,
 For he bade them wait no longer.
 They came to a castle wide,
 By name ycleped Matelan;
 therein was Hilda dwelling,
 And with her was her daughter,
 the maid about whose charms all men were telling.
 With them sent Hartmut also
 two earls of wealth and name,
 Who with him out of Normandy
 over the waters came.
 He bade them see Queen Hilda,
 and kindly to bespeak her;
 To pledge to her his friendship,
 and say that his goodwill would ne'er forsake her.
 Of her they must ask her daughter,
 for him who in his mind
 So high had ever set her,
 above all womankind:
 In worthy love he wooed her,
 and she would rank be taking
 That for aye would make her happy;
 to do her will she ne'er would find him lacking.
 To the maiden's waiting-women
 the news was quickly told,
 That from out the land of Normandy
 a band of wooers bold
 Hither rode to Matelan,
 and for Gu-drun were suing:
 Hilda hushed the tidings,
 for now Gu-drun in fright the tale was ruing.
 Queen Hilda's faithful warders
 opened soon the gate;
 Those who had ridden thither
 need no longer wait;
 They to come in were bidden.
 The gate was thrown wide open,

And the men sent there by Hartmut
into Matelan rode: no ill to them did happen.
They quickly told their wishes,
to see King Hettel's wife.
It was not yet allowed them;
they who should guard her life,
And to the king must answer,
at first had this forbidden:
They never left uncared for
Hilda the queen, and eke Gu-drun the maiden.
At last the men of Hartmut
into the hall were led.
To them the queenly Hilda
kindly greeting made,
As did Gu-drun the lady,
with fair and lofty bearing;
But she, the high-born maiden,
love for Herwic in her heart was wearing.
Altho' they felt unfriendly,
yet drink they gave to the men
Ere yet they told their errand;
freely then the queen
Bade them to be seated
before herself and her daughter.
She begged them then to tell her:
"What boon to seek had brought them o'er the water?"
All the men of Hartmut
before their seats yet stood,
As well-bred men beseemeth,
and errand-bearers should.
Then they told the ladies
what they would there be doing,—
That for their master, Hartmut,
they for the fair Gu-drun had come a-wooing.
The high-born maiden answered:
"Of this I nought will hear,—
That with the young King Hartmut
I the crown should share,
Before our friendly kinsmen,
and troth to him be plighted:
The name of the knight is Herwic
whose love shall never by myself be slighted.
"To him I am betrothed;
me he chose for a wife,
And him for myself I have taken.
Ever, throughout his life,
All of good I wish him
that can henceforth befall him:
Ne'er, till my days are ended,
will I ask the love of another, or my lord will call him."
One of them then answered:
"This warning Hartmut gives:
If nay shall be your answer,
before three days, if he lives,
Against great Matelan castle
you shall see him leading
All his knightly followers."
Smiles at this were the maiden's face o'erspreading.
Their leave they would be taking,
and hasten on their way,
Those two great earls so haughty;
but Hilda bade them stay.
Altho' she ne'er had known them,
of gifts she was not chary;
But yet they would not take them,
for crafty men were they, and in truth were wary.
At those sent there by Hartmut
Hettel's followers sneered,
And said, their scorn and anger
they very little feared:
If to drink the wine of Hettel
they were, in truth, unwilling,

Then this warning gave they:
that they their cup with blood would soon be filling.
When they had heard this answer,
back to the shore they went
Whence they had been by Hartmut
upon their errand sent.
He then ran forth to meet them, to ask how they were treated,
And what had them befallen,
and how his courtship by Gu-drun was greeted.
Then one of them thus answered:
"This to us they said:
The high and queenly maiden
a lover long has had,
For whom, beyond all others,
love in her heart she is feeling:
If you will not taste their wine-cup,
they soon will fill to you, your life-blood spilling."
"Ah, woe is me!" said Hartmut,
when he this answer heard;
"My heart is full of anger,
with shame I hear your word!
Never men more friendly
shall I need, till I am dying,
Than those who now will help me."
Straightway his men upsprang, on the shore then lying.
Ludwig now and Hartmut,
with their men, set out for war;
Their banners high uplifted
in pride and wrath they bore.
These from Matelan castle
were seen afar to shimmer:
"Cheer up!" then said the maiden;
"Herwic and Hettel come! their weapons glimmer!"
But Hilda saw the standard
bore not King Hettel's mark:
"Ah, woe shall now betide us
before this day grows dark!
To seek Gu-drun are coming
foemen grim and daring;
Many a well-made helmet
their blows shall hew before the night is nearing."
Then her friendly Hegelings
thus to Hilda spake:
"If those led on by Hartmut
to-day an onslaught make,
Wounds we then must deal them,
and show we are the stronger."
Queen Hilda then gave bidding
to shut the castle gates, and wait no longer.
But the men of brave King Hettel
followed not her hest;
They who the castle guarded
thought to fight their best.
They bade that now their banners
to the shafts be fastened;
King Hettel's daring followers,
to slay his foes, from out the castle hastened.
The bars that should be lowered,
to keep the foemen out,
Were left, in over-boldness,
and the gates not fully shut,
Since from Hartmut's foreguard
they little harm foreboded.
But when they pressed in boldly,
then came the rest, who ever on them crowded.
A thousand men or over
stood before the gate;
These, their swords upbearing,
the fight did there await.
A thousand more with Hartmut
now came thronging thickly;
They then from their steeds alighted,
and back to the rear they sent their horses quickly.

Spears in hand they carried,
 with points full keen to cut.
 Who could shun their onset?
 With heavy wounds they smote
 Those who the castle guarded,
 in their pride o'erweening.
 Just at the hour came Ludwig,
 with his Norman knights, as the fight was now beginning.
 Much the women sorrowed
 as Ludwig nearer rode:
 The banners o'er them floating
 well and proudly showed
 The fearless foe oncoming;
 beneath each standard flocking,
 Three thousand now came boldly,
 tho' sad on their homeward way they might yet be looking.
 Before the walls beleaguered
 the guards were a busy band:
 Never harder fighters
 were seen in any land
 Than were the faithful warders
 in Hettel's castle dwelling;
 Their blows they were thickly dealing,
 and Hartmut's men their strength were quickly feeling.
 Ludwig, Hartmut's father,
 the Norman king, was seen
 From hardened rims of bucklers
 to strike a fiery sheen:
 Truly, great was the bravery
 that now his heart was swelling;
 His friends and followers also,
 in the bloody game, were bold beyond all telling.
 When they who the castle guarded
 hoped for rest and peace,
 Then their daring foemen
 did nearer to them press,
 Led by him of Normandy:
 the youthful Hartmut's father
 Grudged no toil to help him;
 and this from that day's fight one well might gather.
 Now the trustful warders
 began in truth to mourn,
 That they, 'gainst Hilda's bidding,
 had their care forborne,—
 The hest of the wife of Hettel,
 the high and worthy lady.
 For this their shields were shattered,
 and many a life was lost, in fight too ready.
 Ludwig now and Hartmut
 on the field had met,
 And, holding speech together,
 learned that, striving yet,
 Queen Hilda's men were seeking
 the castle gates to fasten;
 Then, with shields before them,
 to bear their flags within they all did hasten.
 Rocks were hurled from the castle,
 and many spears were thrown,
 But the foe it hurt but little,
 and his daring lessened none.
 Little thought was given
 to the dead around them lying:
 With heavy stones down beaten,
 many bold besiegers there fell dying.
 When Hartmut and King Ludwig
 came within the gate,
 Many, badly wounded,
 from them their death-stroke met.
 For this the lovely maiden
 began to sorrow sorely;
 Now in Hettel's castle
 the woe they wrought was growing greater hourly.

Then the king of Normandy
 was glad enough, I ween,
 When to the halls of Hettel
 he could lead his men,
 Bearing well their weapons:
 soon his banner fluttered
 Over the roof of the castle.
 Hilda at this her sorrow loudly uttered.
 Greatly do I wonder
 what might these guests befall,
 Had now the grim old Wà-te
 been there, and seen it all,
 The while the men of Hartmut,
 with Ludwig, brave and daring,
 Thro' the halls were rushing,
 and from her home the fair Gu-drun were tearing.
 Both Wà-te and King Hettel,
 if to them that day
 A warning had been given,
 would stoutly have barred the way;
 They their foemen's helmets
 with swords would so have riven
 That back to their homes in Normandy,
 without Gu-drun, would they have soon been driven.
 Now within the castle
 were all in saddest mood;
 So men to-day might sorrow.
 Whate'er the foemen would,
 There did they lay hands on,
 and took from out the dwelling.
 Rich grew Hartmut's followers,—
 you well may trust that I the truth am telling.
 Then came the bold young Hartmut
 where he Gu-drun could see,
 And said: "Most worthy lady,
 you erst looked down on me;
 But now both I and my followers
 think of your kin so little,
 We will not seize and hold them,
 but slay and hang them, so the strife to settle."
 Then said the maiden only:
 "Alas! O father mine,
 Had you of this been knowing,
 that I, a child of thine,
 One day from out your kingdom
 would thus by foes be stolen,
 Never to me, poor maiden,
 such woe and sorry shame had here befallen."
 Then was the gold and clothing
 borne out by the robber band:
 Forth they took Queen Hilda,
 led by her snow-white hand.
 Matelan's goodly castle
 they would have burned up gladly;
 For what became of the dwellers
 the Normans never cared, nor thought of sadly.
 But Hartmut now had bidden
 that it should not be burned,
 To leave the land he hastened,
 and home again he turned,
 Before 'twas known to Hettel,
 who with his men was lying
 Within the Waalisch marches,
 and there against his foe his strength was trying.
 "Leave your stolen booty!"
 to his men young Hartmut said;
 "At home my father's riches
 will I give to you instead:
 Thus o'er the watery pathway
 our sail will be the lighter."
 To Gu-drun the hand of Ludwig
 brought a heavy wrong, and woe full bitter.

They overthrew the castle,
 the town with fire they burned;
 From it the best was taken;
 with wealth they homeward turned:
 Two and sixty women
 thence with them they carried,
 And many lovely maidens.
 With heartfelt woe was queenly Hilda wearied.
 How were they filled with sadness
 to leave the wine behind!
 Now did the queenly mother
 a seat in the window find,
 And looked upon her daughter,
 from home in sorrow turning.
 Many a stately lady
 the Normans left in tears, and bitterly mourning.
 Weeping now and wailing
 was heard on either hand;
 No one there was happy,
 when from the father-land
 The foe with Hilda's daughter
 and with her maidens hasted.
 Many, now but children,
 for this, when men, to work them woe ne'er rested.
 Those who were seized by Hartmut
 down to the shore he took;
 All their lands were wasted;
 their homes went up in smoke.
 Now his hopes and wishes
 happily were granted:
 Both Gu-drun and Hildeburg
 he with him carried off,—the prize he wanted.
 Well he knew that Hettel
 was many a league away,
 And war was grimly waging;
 no more would Hartmut stay.
 Yet from the Hegeling kingdom
 no whit too fast he speeded,
 For word was sent by Hilda
 to Hettel and his friends, that much their help was needed.
 How mournful were the tidings
 before the king she laid!—
 That in his home and castle
 his knights were lying dead,
 Or else were left by Hartmut
 now with death-wounds bleeding;
 That foes had seized his daughter,
 and with her many maids were homeward speeding.
 She said: "Now tell King Hettel
 that I am here alone;
 Evil hath me o'ertaken, and now,
 with pride o'ergrown,
 Our mighty foeman, Ludwig,
 back to his land is faring;
 A thousand men or better
 lie at our gates, and the pains of death are bearing."
 Quickly then went Hartmut,
 and, ere three days were o'er,
 On board his keels was ready;
 these the plunder bore,
 As much as they could carry,
 whate'er his men had stolen.
 The men of brave King Hettel
 were dazed and stunned by all that had befallen.
 What further did betide them,
 who in truth can tell?
 Loud on the ear it sounded,
 as they shifted the flapping sail,
 And away from the Hegeling kingdom,
 unto an isle forsaken,
 They their barks were turning;
 the name of Wulpensand—or shore of the wolves—it had taken.

Tale the Sixteenth. HOW HILDA SENT TO HETTEL AND HERWIC TO ASK THEIR HELP AGAINST HARTMUT.

The fair and queenly Hilda,
 with all her will and mind,
 Gave her thoughts now wholly
 trusty men to find
 To bear the tale to Hettel.
 Her heart indeed was riven
 By the wrongful deeds of Hartmut,
 and food for tears he to her eyes had given.
 To Herwic and her husband
 she bade that it be said
 That foes had seized her daughter,
 that many knights lay dead;
 And she was left in wretchedness,
 lonely and forsaken;
 That all her gold and jewels
 the Normans on their way had with them taken.
 Quickly rode the heralds
 and through the land they went:
 The queen in greatest sorrow
 these on their way had sent.
 Upon the seventh morning,
 they came where they were greeted
 With the sight of beleaguering Hegelings
 who before their Moorland foes were seated.
 Oft in knightly matches
 strove they every day,
 And one might also hear them
 at many a game and play,
 That they might not be weary
 who the siege were keeping;
 Some at a mark were shooting,
 and others strove in running and in leaping.
 When by the Danish Horant
 errand-bearers were seen
 Who to the land were coming,
 thither sent by the queen,
 Then said he unto Hettel:
 "With news for us they're riding;
 May God in kindness grant it,
 no ill to those at home is now betiding!"
 The king himself went forward,
 and met them where they stood.
 He said, with seemly bearing,
 to them in their sorry mood:
 "Brave knights, I give you welcome
 here to this far-off border.
 How fares it with Queen Hilda?
 Who sent you here? and who is left to guard her?"
 Said one: "Your lady sent us;
 to you for help she turns:
 Wasted are your castles;
 your lands the foeman burns.
 Gu-drun from thence is carried;
 her maidens, too, are taken:
 Never can your kingdom
 from all these woes and ills again awaken.
 "This must I say, moreover,
 we are in straitest need;
 Now of your men and kindred
 a thousand there lie dead;
 And into far-off kingdoms
 have foes your riches carried;
 Your hoard of wealth is scattered:
 it shames good knights that thus your lands are harried."
 The king then bade them tell him
 who these deeds had done.
 One among them answered,
 and their names to him made known:

"Ludwig was one, the Norman;
 with many knights he fought us;
 Hartmut, his son, was the other:
 'twas they the inroad made, and havoc wrought us."
 Then King Hettel answered:
 "To Hartmut I would not give,
 For his bride, Gu-drun my daughter;
 for this he now doth strive
 To waste with war my kingdom.
 I know his lands are holden
 Of Hagen, her mother's father;
 to woo her should his rank not him embolden.
 "To our beleaguered foemen
 we nought of this must tell,
 And to our friends but whisper
 the ills that us befell;
 We then must call our kinsmen
 hither to be hasting.
 Worse could never happen
 unto good knights at home, from warfare resting."
 Herwic then was bidden
 to Hettel forthwith to go:
 Hettel's friends and kindred
 and his men were sent for, too.
 When now these knights so worthy
 their way to him had taken,
 They found their king and master
 dark in mind, and of every hope forsaken.
 Then said the lord of the Hegelings:
 "To you I make my moan;
 And, trusting in your friendship,
 my sorrows must I own:
 The queen, my Lady Hilda,
 has sent to give us warning,
 That the men of the Hegeling kingdom
 are ill bestead, and bitterly are mourning.
 "My lands with fire are wasted,
 and my castle broken down;
 Ill our walls were guarded
 while we from home were gone:
 Foes have seized my daughter;
 my kin in death are sleeping;
 My trusty men are slaughtered
 to whom I left my land and name in keeping."
 Herwic now was weeping,
 in his eyes the tear-drops stood;
 Wet were the eyes of Hettel,
 and fast they overflowed:
 So it was with others,
 at seeing them thus weeping;
 Every one was sorrowful
 who, near the king, his faith to him was keeping.
 Then said the aged Wâ-te:
 "Further of this say nought.
 For all the woe and losses
 these friends to us have brought,
 Soon will we repay them,
 and we shall yet be gladdened;
 Ludwig's kin and Hartmut's
 shall at our hands for this erelong be saddened."
 Hettel asked in wonder:
 "How can that be done?"
 To him old Wâ-te answered:
 "'Tis best that peace be won
 Now with the king of Moorland,
 with whom we yet are warring;
 Our men, who here besiege him,
 to seek for fair Gu-drun we may then be sparing."
 Wise was the aged Wâ-te,
 the words he spake were meet:
 "To-morrow morning early,
 let us with Siegfried treat;

And we ought so to bear us
 that he shall well be knowing
 That, should we not allow it,
 he with his men can ne'er be homeward going."
 Then said the daring Herwic:
 "Wâ-te has spoken right;
 To-day must you be thinking
 how, with the morrow's light,
 You all before the foeman
 may show a warlike bearing:
 It gives me pain that women
 should make us leave our siege, and hence be faring."
 Then they got together
 horses and clothes with speed;
 Unto the words of Wâ-te
 they readily gave heed.
 When the day was dawning,
 they again were striving
 'Gainst those from Abakia.
 Great praise for this were all to them soon giving.
 On every side, with banners,
 they to the field did throng;
 Many, sound in body,
 there were slain erelong:
 Wâ-te's men from Sturm-land
 "Nearer! Nearer!" shouted;
 But those they would o'er-master
 were quicker yet in fight, and nought it bootied.
 Soon the knightly Irold,
 over the edge of his shield,
 Called out, "Men of Moorland,
 to peace with us will you yield?
 King Hettel bids us ask you,
 will you this be choosing?
 Your lands so far are lying,
 that you your goods and men will else be losing."
 Siegfried, lord of Moorland,
 answered to him thus:
 "Would you for peace have pledges,
 then win the fight o'er us;
 With no one will I bargain
 for aught my name may lessen:
 If you think to overcome us,
 you will the more by this your losses hasten."
 Then spake the knightly Fru-te:
 "If help to us you'll give,
 And pledge your word to do it,
 your stronghold you may leave
 And go from my master's kingdom,
 without more bloody fighting."
 The Moors from Karadie
 on this stretched forth the hand, their faith thus plighting.
 There came to strife a stand-still,
 this I for truth may say.
 The glad and happy warriors
 met that selfsame day;
 Those who erst were foemen
 their help to each other granted.
 They both had quenched their hatred;
 to fight the Normans now was all they wanted.
 Then to Siegfried of Moorland
 at once King Hettel told
 All the heavy tidings
 that he in his breast did hold;
 He pledged to him his friendship,
 so long as he was living,
 If Hartmut's foul misdoing
 now to repay, his help he would be giving.
 To him the lord of Alzabie,
 the Moorish Siegfried said:
 "Knew we where to find them,
 they should our coming dread."

The aged Wâ-te answered:
 "I can show you nearly
 Their path across the water:
 and we perhaps on the sea may meet them early."
 Then to them all spake Hettel:
 "Where can ships be sought?
 And, if I wish to harm them,
 how bring my wish about?
 I might at home make ready
 within their lands to seek them,
 And there, when I had found them,
 my anger for my wrongs should quick o'ertake them."
 To him then said old Wâ-te:
 "In this I can help you still;
 God is ever mighty
 to do whate'er he will.
 I know within these borders
 now are lying near us
 Well-made ships full seventy;
 filled with food, these barks from the sands will bear us.
 "In them have wandering pilgrims
 sailed the waters o'er:
 Their ships, whatever happens,
 we must seize upon the shore;
 The pilgrims must be willing
 that on the sand we leave them,
 Until our Norman foemen
 make good our wrongs, or we again shall brave them."
 At once old Wâ-te started,
 no longer would he wait;
 A hundred knights went with him,
 the others lingered yet.
 He said he came for buying;
 what could the pilgrims sell him?
 For this men died thereafter,
 and, for himself, but sorry luck befell him.
 On the shore he found the pilgrims,—
 this I know is true,—
 Fully thirty hundred,
 I ween, and better, too.
 To fight were they unready,
 and could not rouse them quickly:
 Nearer came King Hettel,
 and with him led his men, now crowding thickly.
 Their goods the pilgrims guarded,
 yet Wâ-te sent on shore
 All that he had no need for,
 of silver and clothes a store;
 But the food was left on shipboard,
 so old Wâ-te chooses:
 He said he should come hereafter,
 and would reward them well for all their losses.
 Sadly mourned the pilgrims,
 for sorest was their need;
 But for all they said old Wâ-te
 cared not a crust of bread:
 The bold, unyielding warrior,
 stern and never smiling,
 Said: "Both ships and flatboats
 they to leave to him must now be willing."
 Hettel recked but little
 if ever they sailed again
 Over the sea with their crosses:
 then he took of their men
 Five hundred at least, or over,
 the best they had among them;
 Of these to the Hegeling kingdom
 few came back, from the death that overhung them.
 I know not whether Hettel
 atoned for his evil deed
 Done to these poor pilgrims,
 that made their hearts to bleed,

And, in a far-off kingdom,
 rent their band, to their sorrow.
 I ween the God in heaven
 saw the wrong, and his anger showed on the morrow.
 King Hettel and his followers
 met with a kindly breeze,
 And now their way were taking
 quickly across the seas;
 Seeking for their foemen,
 they sailed far over the water,
 Wherever they might find them,
 longing to show their wrath, and bent on slaughter.

Tale the Seventeenth. HOW HETTEL CAME TO THE WULPENSAND IN SEARCH OF HIS DAUGHTER.

Ludwig, king of the Normans,
 and Hartmut, too, his son,
 Now, with all their followers,
 far away had gone,
 And on a lone, wild seashore,
 after their toil, were resting.
 Though many there were gathered,
 yet little happiness they then were tasting.
 'Twas on a broad, low island,
 hight the Wulpensand,
 That now the brave King Ludwig,
 and they of the Norman land,
 Shelter for men and horses
 had found unto their liking;
 But a doom to them most woful
 erelong must come, instead of the rest they were seeking.
 The very high-born maidens,
 torn from the Hegeling land,
 Had been led out, and wandered
 along the barren sand;
 So far as 'twas allowed them
 to show their feelings freely,
 They who had been stolen
 in sadness wept before the foeman daily.
 Fires upon the seashore
 were seen on every side;
 The men from far-off Normandy
 were thinking there to abide.
 Gladly with the maidens
 would they seven days have rested,
 And there have made them lodgings;
 but every hope of this erelong was blasted.
 While on this isle forsaken
 Hartmut now must stay,
 Loth were he and his followers
 the hope to put away,
 Which till now they fostered,
 that they for rest might tarry
 Throughout a week in the shelter
 whither they the maidens fair did carry.
 It was from far-off Matelan
 that Ludwig and his band
 The fair Gu-drun had taken
 unto this lonely strand;
 Nor felt they now uneasy
 lest to their hidden dwelling
 Wâ-te them should follow,
 and never harm from him were they foretelling.
 Now saw King Ludwig's sailors,
 tossing on the wave,
 A ship with sails the richest.
 To the king they warning gave;
 But when 'twas seen by Hartmut,
 and others with him standing,
 That on the sails were crosses,
 they said these must be pilgrims, bent on landing.

On the waters floating
 three good ships were seen,
 With new and well-made flatboats;
 they bore across the main
 Those who on their clothing
 never yet wore crosses,
 Their love to God thus showing.
 The Normans must from them meet heavy losses.
 As they the shore were nearing,
 one on the ships might see
 Helmets brightly shining.
 No more from care were free
 King Ludwig and his kinsmen,
 and harm their fears foreboded:
 "Look there!" then shouted Hartmut;
 "with grimpest foes of mine these ships are loaded."
 The ships were turned so quickly
 that now men loudly heard
 Rudders strained and cracking,
 held by those who steered.
 Both the young and aged,
 who on the sea-sands rested,
 Were indeed bewildered
 when to spring on shore the foeman hasted.
 Ludwig and young Hartmut
 their shields in hand now bore.
 For them it had been easier
 to reach their homes once more
 If they had not too freely
 their rest on the island taken:
 They had falsely reckoned
 that Hettel had now no friends, and was all forsaken.
 Ludwig called out loudly
 to all his trusty men,
 (He thought it child's play only
 that he before had seen,)
 "Now with worthy foemen
 must I, at length, be striving!
 He shall be the richer
 who 'neath my flag his help to me is giving."
 Soon was Hartmut's banner
 raised upon the shore.
 The ships had now come nearer;
 with spears the Normans bore
 To reach the foe were easy
 from where they now were waiting:
 I ween the aged Wā-te
 was ready with his shield, the foeman meeting.
 Ne'er before so grimly
 did champions guard their land.
 Boldly the Hegeling warriors
 nearer pressed to the strand;
 Soon they met the Normans
 with sword and spear, undaunted;
 Blows they freely bartered:
 such bargains cheaply given no more they wanted.
 Everywhere the Hegelings
 sprang upon the shore.
 After a wind from the hill-tops
 was never seen before
 Snow so thickly whirling
 as spears from hands that threw them:
 Though they had done it gladly
 idle it were to shun the strokes that slew them.
 Thick fly the spears on both sides:
 the time but slowly goes,
 Till they on the beach are standing.
 Quickly on his foes
 Sprang the aged Wā-te,
 just as they were nearing;
 His mood was of the grimpest,
 and soon they saw what mind he now was bearing.

Ludwig, king of the Normans,
 then at Wā-te ran,
 And hurled a spear well sharpened
 against the brave old man.
 The shaft, in splinters shattered,
 high thro' air went crashing,
 For Ludwig drove it bravely;
 soon to the fight came Wā-te's kinsmen dashing.
 With a heavy stroke, old Wā-te
 Ludwig's helmet cut;
 The edge of the sword he wielded
 the head of his foeman smote,
 Who beneath his breastplate
 a shirt of silk was wearing;
 (In Abalie 'twas woven.)
 were it not for this, his end he must be nearing.
 Hardly from him could Ludwig
 with life and limb go free;
 The spot he would fain be leaving,
 for Wā-te was ill to see
 When he was roused to anger,
 and to win the day was trying:
 Struck by his hand were many,
 who, brave in warfare, now on the field lay dying.
 Irold and young Hartmut
 each on the other sprang:
 On either side their weapons
 on the foeman's helmet rang;
 Throughout the throng of fighters,
 all could hear it loudly;
 For bold in war was Irold,
 and Hartmut, too, was brave, and bore him proudly.
 Herwic from the Sealands,
 a warrior strong and good,
 Could not reach the landing,
 but leaped into the flood,
 And in the waves was standing,
 up to his shoulders hidden.
 Soon to his cost was he learning
 how hard a task it is to win a maiden.
 They the shore who guarded
 their foemen thought to drown
 While in the waters struggling.
 Shafts at them were thrown,
 And many on them broken;
 but they, their foes now seeking,
 Soon the sands were treading,
 and many a knight his wrath on them was wreaking.
 Ere they had reached the shoreland,
 one saw the watery flood
 Dyed by the killed and wounded,
 in hue as red as blood;
 Everywhere, so widely
 the reddened waves were flowing,
 One could not shoot beyond them,
 how far soe'er he might his spear be throwing.
 Heavier toil and losses
 heroes never found,
 And never so many warriors
 lay trampled on the ground:
 Enough were they for a kingdom
 who lay, unwounded, dying.
 The Normans who o'erthrew them,
 on all sides too, I ween, in death were lying.
 It was to save his daughter
 that there King Hettel fought,
 And all his kinsmen with him.
 On every side were wrought,
 By him and those who helped him,
 havoc and bitter sorrow.
 Dead on the Wulpensand
 were many bodies found before the morrow.

Unto their lords all faithful,
 they strove upon the sand,—
 Alike the men of Normandy
 and they of the Hegeling land.
 Warriors brave from Denmark
 fought with matchless daring;
 He ne'er should wait their onset
 who much for his welfare or his life was caring.
 Morunc and with him Ortwin
 boldly held their ground,
 And for themselves won honor;
 nowhere could be found
 Men who greater slaughter
 wrought, with hearts undaunted:
 The heroes twain, with their followers,
 gave full many wounds, with spears well planted.
 Proudly the men from Moorland,
 as I have heard it said,
 When from their ships they landed,
 the way to the foemen led.
 Hettel hoped, in his struggle,
 help from them to be gaining,
 For they were daring fighters:
 one saw the blood beneath their helmets raining.
 How could he who led them
 have braver or bolder been?
 That day he dimmed with life-blood
 many breastplates' sheen;
 Siegfried it was, unyielding
 in storm of battle ever.
 How could the Danish Fru-te,
 or even Wâ-te the old, have shown them braver?
 Thickly hurled were lances,
 hither and thither thrown:
 Ortwin, with his followers,
 in hopeful mood came on;
 Helmets that day he shattered,
 blows upon them dealing.
 Gu-drun was bitterly weeping:
 her women, too, were deepest sorrow feeling.
 The strife, on both sides, lasted
 throughout the livelong day;
 Longing to reach each other,
 they crowded to the fray.
 There to knights and warriors
 must the fight go badly,
 Where the friends of Hettel
 to win his daughter back were striving gladly.
 The evening sun sank lower;
 and for King Hettel now
 His losses grew the greater.
 King Ludwig's men, I trow,
 Did their best in fighting,
 but could not flee the slaughter;
 Their foes they wounded deeply,
 and guarded thus Gu-drun from those who sought her.
 The strife began at morning;
 by night alone 'twas stopped,
 And steadily had lasted;
 they ne'er their weapons dropped.
 The old and young together
 gained no shame in fighting.
 Now the brave King Hettel
 forward pressed, the king of the Normans meeting.

Tale the Eighteenth. HOW LUDWIG SLEW HETTEL, AND STOLE AWAY IN THE NIGHT.

High in hand their weapons
 Hettel and Ludwig bore,—
 Well had they been sharpened.
 Soon each knew the more

Who was now his foeman,
 such strength they both were showing.
 Ludwig slew King Hettel;
 and out of this our mournful tale is growing.
 When the lord of Matelan
 upon the field lay slain,
 Soon 'twas told to his daughter:
 loudly then began
 Gu-drun to mourn her father,
 so did many a maiden;
 Not one could stop her wailing:
 friends and foes alike were sorrow-laden.
 Soon as the grim old Wâ-te
 the death of the king did know,
 He cried and roared in anger.
 Like to the evening glow,
 Now were helmets blazing,
 beneath the strokes quick given
 By him and all his followers,
 who by their loss were unto madness driven.
 However hard their fighting,
 how could it bring them good?
 Drenched was all the island
 with many knights' hot blood.
 Not yet the Hegeling warriors
 to think of peace were ready;
 Away from the Wulpensand
 they only wished to bring Gu-drun, their lady.
 In stormy fight the Waal men
 bewreked the death of the king;
 To many a fighting Ortlander
 and hard-pressed Hegeling
 Those who came from Denmark
 of friendship gave a token:
 Soon these knights so daring
 found in their hands their trusty weapons broken.
 Now to avenge his father
 Ortwin bravely strove:
 Faithful to him did Horant
 and all his followers prove.
 Night the field had darkened,
 the light of day was failing;
 Then were given to many
 wounds from which the life-blood fast was welling.
 Soon, in the dark, on Horant
 a Danish follower sprang;
 The sword that he was holding
 loud on the armor rang:
 Thinking he was a foeman,
 Horant at once upon him
 Wrought most bitter sorrow:
 a deadly wound by that warrior brave was done him.
 When Horant saw that his kinsman
 beneath his blow lay dead,
 Then he bade that his banner
 be borne with his own o'erhead.
 The voice of him who was dying
 told whose life he had taken
 With his hand so rashly;
 sorely he mourned the friend who never would waken.
 Loudly called out Herwic:
 "Murder here is done!
 Since we can see no longer,
 and daylight now is gone,
 We all shall kill each other,
 friends and foes together.
 If this shall last till morning,
 two may be left to fight, but not another."
 Where'er they saw old Wâ-te
 on the stormy fighting-ground,
 No one there was willing
 near him to be found;

No welcome, in his madness,
 was he to any giving;
 Many a foe he wounded,
 and laid on the spot that he would ne'er be leaving.
 'Twas well the foes were sundered
 until the break of day;
 On either side the foemen
 near each other lay,
 Wounded to death or slaughtered.
 Fast the light was waning,
 Not yet the moon was risen,
 and the Hegeling foe the field were nowhere gaining.
 The warriors grim, unwillingly,
 to the strife now put a stop;
 The hands of all were weary
 ere they gave the struggle up:
 But, when the fight was over,
 they near each other loitered.
 Wherever fires were burning,
 for each the other's shields and helmets glittered.
 Ludwig then and Hartmut,
 lords of the Norman land,
 Talked aside together.
 Then to his faithful band
 Spake the elder warrior:
 "Why be longer staying
 So near the brave old Wā-te,
 who all of us is madly bent on slaying?"
 The wily king then bade them:
 "Lie low, and be not seen,
 With your heads upon your bucklers:
 you then must make a din;
 And so the men of the Hegelings
 my plan will not be knowing,—
 That, if I now can do it,
 I with you all may hence unseen be going."
 Ludwig's men and kinsmen
 did as he had said:
 They upon their sackbuts
 and trumpets loudly played,
 As if they, by their prowess,
 the land had gained them wholly.
 Ludwig now to his followers
 showed his crafty plot and cunning fully.
 Then were heard, on all sides,
 mingled shouts and cries;
 But wailing from the maidens
 was not allowed to rise:
 All who would not stop it
 were threatened death by drowning,—
 To be sunk beneath the waters,—
 if they were sobbing heard, or loudly moaning.
 Whate'er was owned by the Normans
 now to the ships was ta'en;
 The dead were there left lying,
 e'en where they were slain.
 Friends were lost to many
 who, seeking, could not find them:
 So few there were still living,
 that many an empty ship was left behind them.
 Thus unbeknown and slyly,
 sailed away o'er the main
 The men of the land of Normandy;
 great was the women's pain
 From kinsfolk to be sundered,
 and yet to hush their weeping.
 Of this the men knew nothing
 who now upon the Wulpensand were sleeping.
 Before the day was dawning,
 well were on their way
 They whom the Danish warriors
 had thought that morn to slay.

Then Wā-te bade that loudly
 his war-horn should be sounded;
 He was in haste to follow,
 and hoped erelong to fell them, deeply wounded.
 On foot and on their horses,
 the men of the Hegeling land
 All were seen together,
 flocking o'er the sand,
 To fight the fleeing Normans;
 never in this they rested.
 Ludwig with his followers
 already far upon their way had hasted.
 Many ships lay empty,
 and clothing there was found;
 All about the Wulpensand
 'twas scattered o'er the ground;
 Many weapons also
 were seen, with none to bear them.
 They had overslept their going,
 and never to harm their foes could they come near them.
 When this was told to Wā-te,
 with anger he was torn:
 How for the death of Hettel
 he bitterly did mourn!
 And that on Ludwig's body
 his wrath he was not wreaking!
 Helmets there lay shattered;
 for this must many a woman's heart be aching.
 How gloomily and sadly
 now, in angry mood,
 Ortwin was bewailing
 the loss of his warriors good!
 He said: "Rouse up, my fighters!
 we may perhaps o'ertake them
 Before they leave these waters;
 not far from shore we yet in flight may check them."
 Willingly old Wā-te
 would his bidding do:
 Fru-te the winds was watching,
 to learn which way they blew.
 Then said he to his kinsmen:
 "What helps it though we hasten?
 Mark what now I tell you:
 the thirty miles they've gained we ne'er can lessen.
 "Moreover, we of fighters
 have not here enough
 That we in aught can harm them,
 e'en should we now set off:
 Scorn me not," said Fru-te,
 "and to my words give hearing;
 What more to say is needful?
 Your foes you cannot reach, howe'er you're speeding.
 "Bid that now the wounded
 upon the ships be laid;
 Then on the field of battle
 let search for the dead be made,
 And bid that they be buried
 upon this strand forsaken,
 So friends may rest together;
 this good at least from them should not be taken."
 All, standing there together,
 wringing their hands were seen.
 For this one sorrow only,
 would their lot have hapless been,—
 To lose the youthful maiden,
 Hilda's lovely daughter.
 How, when they saw her mother,
 if home they went, could news so sad be brought her?
 Then to them said Morunc:
 "Would there were nothing more,
 Beyond our own sad losses,
 for which our hearts are sore!

Small reward will be given
 for the news we home shall carry,
 That Hettel dead is lying:
 far from Hilda fain would I longer tarry.”
 Then went the warriors searching
 for the dead upon the sand.
 Those they knew were Christians
 who lay upon the strand,
 As the Sturmisch Wâ-te bade them,
 were all together carried;
 Then both the old and the younger
 chose a spot whereon the dead were buried.
 Then said the knight, young Ortwin:
 “Let us bury them here;
 And thought must we be taking
 to build a church full near,
 That they be not forgotten,
 while this their end is showing.
 For it shall all their kinsmen
 give of their wealth, each one his share bestowing.”
 Then spake the Sturmisch Wâ-te:
 “In this thou well hast said;
 We now should sell the horses
 and the clothing of the dead,
 Who on the shore are lying;
 so, since their life is ended,
 Shall many poor and needy,
 with the wealth they left, be holpen and befriended.”
 Then asked the warrior Irold, if foes who there lay dead
 Should also now be buried,
 or if wolves should on them feed,
 And hungry ravens tear them,
 that round their bodies hovered?
 Then to the wise they listened;
 none of the dead were left on the field uncovered.
 When now the fight was over,
 and all were free from care,
 Hettel, their king, they buried,
 who for his daughter dear,
 Upon this barren seashore,
 e'en unto death had striven.
 To others who had fallen,
 whate'er their land and name, was burial given.
 First, the men from Moorland
 each by himself they laid;
 The same was done for the Hegelings
 found among the dead;
 Unto the Normans, also,
 gave they graves allotted:
 Alone was each one buried,
 if Christian he were or heathen, it nothing booted.
 Until six days were over,
 busy were they, at their best,
 And never time were finding
 (for the warriors took no rest)
 To ask for dead and dying
 the grace of God in heaven,
 For sins of which they were guilty;
 that they for their misdeeds should be forgiven.
 Saying mass and singing
 were later heard on the strand.
 Never was God so worshipped,
 in any other land,
 For the dead in stormy fighting.
 Wherever men were lying
 With their death-wounds smitten,
 holy priests they brought to shrive the dying.
 Many there did tarry
 to care for the churchly men.
 A deed of gift was written,
 wherein it could be seen
 How of land to the brothers
 three hundred hides was given.

Far and wide 'twas bruited,
 that well a godly house was builded, and had thriven.
 All who there were mourning
 the loss of friends and kin
 Gave of their wealth a tithing,
 women as well as men,
 For weal of the souls of any
 whose bodies there lay buried.
 The cloister soon was wealthy,
 by the yield of three hundred hides, through toil unwearied.
 Now may God in his keeping
 have those who there lie dead,
 And the holy men there dwelling.
 Those then homeward sped
 Who still upon the Wulpensand
 were left among the living;
 After all their sorrows,
 they reached their fatherland, no more in warfare striving.

Tale the Nineteenth. HOW THE HEGELINGS WENT HOME TO THEIR OWN LAND.

The kinsmen of King Hettel
 upon the sands had left
 Many in death's fast keeping;
 never knights bereft
 Their homeward way had taken,
 hearts so sorry bringing.
 Thereafter lovely women
 for this, with weeping eyes, their hands were wringing.
 Ortwin, the knight of Ortlund,
 who to the fight had come,
 After such shame and losses,
 back to fair Hilda's home
 Feared to bring these tidings,
 his mother dear to sadden.
 She there was waiting daily,
 hoping her men would bring Gu-drun the maiden.
 Wâ-te, fearing sorely,
 rode to Hilda's land;
 The others dared not tell her
 of the loss on the Wulpensand.
 Ill in the storm of fighting,
 his strength her men had warded;
 Not lightly her forgiveness
 he hoped to gain, who thus her lord had guarded.
 When the word was spoken
 that Wâ-te near had come,
 At once were men faint-hearted.
 Erewhiles when he came home,
 Back from the war-field riding,
 it was with war-horns braying.
 This he did at all times;
 but now they all were still, and nought were saying.
 “Woe's me!” said Lady Hilda,
 “what sorrows must we fear?
 The men of the aged Wâ-te
 shattered shields now bear;
 Slowly step the horses,
 with armor heavy-loaded.
 Some evil has befallen.
 Oh! say what harm to the king is now forboded?”
 When thus the queen had spoken,
 but little time had passed
 Ere to the aged Wâ-te
 crowds came up in haste,
 Who of friends and kinsfolk
 tidings now were seeking.
 Soon a tale he told them
 with which the hearts of all were well-nigh breaking.
 Thus spake the Sturmisch Wâ-te:
 “Your loss I may not hide,

Nor falsehood will I tell you;
all in the fight have died.”
The young and old together
at this with fear were stricken.
Ne’er was a throng more wretched;
no other woes could one to theirs e’er liken.
“Alas! my bitter sorrow!”
said King Hettel’s wife.
“From me my lord is sundered,
who there laid down his life,
The great and mighty Hettel!
My pride, how is it fallen!
Lost are child and husband!
Gu-drun I ne’er shall see, from me forever stolen.”
Then both knights and maidens
with sharpest woe were torn;
Their sorrow knew no healing.
Loudly the queen forlorn
Was heard, throughout the palace,
for her husband mourning.
“Ah, wretched me,” cried Hilda,
“that now to Hartmut’s side the luck is turning!”
Then spake the brave old Wâ-te:
“My lady, end your moan:
Home are they coming never,
but when to men are grown
The youths within our kingdom,
sad days will have an ending;
To Ludwig and to Hartmut
the like we’ll do, our wrath upon them spending.”
Then quoth the weeping lady:
“Alas, that I must live!
Whatever I am owning
I would most gladly give
Could e’er my wrongs be righted.
If but this were granted,
That I, poor God-forsaken,
might see Gu-drun again, naught else were wanted.”
Old Wâ-te spake to Hilda:
“Lady, weep no more.
’Tis best that we be sending,
before twelve days are o’er,
To gather all your warriors,
who will help you gladly
To plan a raid on the foeman;
so with the Norman will it yet go badly.”
He said: “My Lady Hilda,
list to what befell:
Erewhile I took from pilgrims
nine ships, and then set sail:
These should again be given
to those we ill have treated;
That when new strifes we’re waging,
a better luck to us may then be meted.”
The weeping Hilda answered:
“’Tis best that this be done;
Ever is it fitting
that men for misdeeds atone.
To steal the goods of pilgrims
is a sin not lightly shriven:
For every mark we’ve taken,
to them three marks of silver shall be given.”
The ships were brought to the pilgrims,
as the queen did say;
Not one there was among them,
when they sailed away,
Who left a curse behind him.
For wrongs they found a healing;
And for Hilda, Hagen’s daughter,
they harbored, when they left, no bitter feeling.
Upon the morrow early,
thither to come was seen

Herwic, the lord of Sealand;
soon he found the queen
Weeping for her husband,
who in death was lying.
She gave the knight a welcome,
with hands she ever wrung, and deeply sighing.
Seeing the lady weeping,
then, too, to weep began
The young and lordly Herwic;
soon spake that well-born man:
“Their lives not all have given,
who help to you are owing,
And who would gladly grant it;
though many by their death their love were showing.
“My arm shall never falter,
nor heart from care be free,
Till Hartmut feels my anger,
who stole the maid from me,
And dared from home to tear her,
death to many dealing:
Soon will I ride to his borders;
then will I seize and hold his lands and dwelling.”
His men, though filled with sorrow,
rode towards the town,
Flocking to Matelan castle.
The queen her hope made known
That, whatsoe’er might happen,
their fealty would not weaken;
And, though the worst befell them,
that she by them would never be forsaken.
To her the men from Friesland
and those from Sturmland went,
And from the Danish kingdom
were warriors likewise sent;
The knights of Morunc also,
from the land of Waleis riding,
Thither came with the Hegelings,
to where the fair Queen Hilda was abiding.
Forthwith there came from Ortland,
Ortwin, Hilda’s son;
Then mourned they, as was fitting,
his father dead and gone.
Soon were all the warriors
aside with their ladies speaking,
And talking of the inroad
the fighters strong one day would thence be making.
Then said the aged Wâ-te:
“‘This can never be
Till those who now are children
fully-grown we see,
And worthy to be swordsmen.
Then, their fathers mourning,
And of their kinsmen mindful,
gladly will they with us to war be turning.”
Queen Hilda then made answer:
“To wait for this were long;
Meanwhile Gu-drun, my daughter,
held by foemen strong,
Must in a far-off kingdom
be kept in bondage bitter;
And I, poor queen and mother,
shall know no bliss, and my heart will ne’er grow lighter.”
Then said the Danish Fru-te:
“‘The maid we cannot free
Until once more your kingdom
shall full of warriors be.
Then, for the struggle ready,
we hence shall ride, unfearing;
And so upon our foemen
shall work the greatest ill with blows unsparing.”
To this Queen Hilda answered:
“‘That day may God soon give;

But I, unhappy woman,
 a weary life must live.
 Whoe'er of me is mindful,
 and of Gu-drun, poor maiden,
 Him will I trust most fully,
 knowing his heart for us with care is laden."
 They now their leave were taking;
 to them the lady spake:
 "May he be blest and happy
 who thought for me shall take.
 'Tis right that you, brave warriors,
 to fight for me are ready;
 Meanwhile for the coming inroad
 do all you can, and therein be you speedy."
 Wisely then spake Wā-te,
 the warrior old and good:
 "Lady, we should be felling
 trees in the western wood.
 Since we to fight have chosen,
 our hopes upon it staking,
 The men of every principedom
 should forty well-built ships for us be making."
 "I too will bid," quoth Hilda,
 "that near the deep sea-flood
 Twenty ships be builded,
 strong, and firm, and good;
 And have them fully ready
 —my hest shall well be heeded—
 To bear my friends and kindred
 to where they for the fight will soon be needed."
 Siegfried, lord of Moorland,
 while their leave they took,
 With kind and seemly bearing,
 thus to the women spoke:
 "You have to tell me only
 when our time to wait is ending;
 To sail shall I be ready,
 nor need you then for me be further sending."
 Then to the sorrowing women,
 before they spread the sail,
 The friendly guests, now leaving,
 bade a kind farewell.
 The hearts of knights and maidens
 deep in woe were sinking;
 Yet warlike deeds they plotted
 of which their Norman foes were never thinking.
 When they at length had ridden
 back again to their land,
 Sadly they mourned their losses:
 then to the Wulpensand,
 For the sake of the dead, did Hilda
 bid that food be taken
 To the priests for them there praying.
 The queen was wise, the dead were not forsaken.
 There she bade to be builded
 a minster fair and wide;
 A house for the sick, and a cloister
 built they at its side,
 Near where the slain were buried.
 In many a land one heareth
 Its name, and of those there fallen:
 'The church of Wulpensand' is the name it beareth.

Tale the Twentieth. HOW HARTMUT WENT HOME TO NORMANDY.

No further will we tell you
 of how with these it fared,
 Or how the cloister-brothers
 their life together shared.
 Now to the tale of Hartmut
 we ask you all to listen;

How he with many maidens,
 high-born and fair, unto his land did hasten.
 After the fight was ended,
 as I have told before,
 For many there was sorrow
 for the bitter wounds they bore:
 Many who had fallen
 on the stormy field lay dying;
 Children bereft of fathers
 bewailed them soon with tears they ne'er were drying.
 With heavy hearts the Normans
 were wafted o'er the flood;
 Every night and morning
 many a warrior good
 Felt ashamed and sorry,
 thus from the sands to be driven;
 So felt the old and the youthful,
 although in all things else they well had thriven.
 They came to the Norman borders,
 unto King Ludwig's land.
 It was a day of gladness
 to all the sailing band,
 To see at last their homesteads
 and thither to be steering.
 Then said one among them:
 "These are Hartmut's towns that we are nearing."
 Helped by kindly breezes,
 soon they reached the shore.
 Now the men of Normandy
 happy hearts all bore,
 When to their wives and children
 they again were coming;
 Long had they been fearing
 that they must die, while they afar were roaming.
 When now the glad King Ludwig
 did on his castles look,
 Thus the lordly Norman
 to Gu-drun, the maiden, spoke:
 "See you that palace, Lady?
 In bliss you may there be living;
 If you to us are kindly,
 our richest lands will we to you be giving."
 Then the high-born maiden
 thus made her sorrow known:
 "To whom should I feel kindly,
 when kindness none have shown?
 From that, alas! I'm sundered,
 and in my hopes am thwarted;
 Nothing I know but hardship,
 and all my weary days I spend sad-hearted."
 Then answered her King Ludwig:
 "Throw off this sorry mood,
 And give your love to Hartmut,
 a knight both brave and good.
 Whatever we are owning
 to give you we are willing;
 With one who is so worthy
 blest may you live, and lofty rank be filling."
 Then spake Hilda's daughter:
 "Why leave me not in peace?
 Rather than wed with Hartmut
 death would I dread far less.
 That he should be my lover
 by birth he is not fitted;
 To lose my life were better
 than take his love and as his bride be greeted."
 When this was heard by Ludwig,
 filled with wrath was he;
 Quick by the hair he seized her,
 and flung her into the sea.
 Straightway the daring Hartmut
 his ready help then gave her;

He sprang at once to the maiden,
 and from the whirling waves his arm did save her.
 Just as the maid was sinking
 Hartmut reached her side;
 Had not her lover helped her
 drowned were she in the tide.
 Her yellow locks well grasping,
 then from out the water
 With his hands he drew her:
 else nought from death had spared Queen Hilda's daughter.
 Back to the ship did Hartmut
 bring the maiden fair;—
 Rough ways to lovely women
 Ludwig did not spare.
 Dragged from out the water,
 she in her smock was seated;
 How full was she of sadness!
 Never before had the maiden thus been treated.
 Then all her friends together
 wept for the lovely maid,
 None could there be happy;
 for what could be more sad
 Than to see the king's own daughter
 handled thus so roughly?
 The thought to them was rising:
 "To us they now will bear themselves more gruffly."
 Then said the knightly Hartmut:
 "Why drown my hoped-for wife,
 Gu-drun, the lovely maiden,
 dear to me as life?
 If any but my father
 so foul a wrong had done her,
 Sore would be my anger,
 and I from him would take both life and honor."
 To him King Ludwig answered:
 "Ever free from shame
 Have I till age been living,
 and still a worthy name
 And rank among my fellows
 will hold till life is ending.
 Bid now Gu-drun, your lady,
 that she no more her scorn on me be spending."
 Now unto Queen Gerlind
 errand-bearers came,
 Who, in mood most happy,
 bore in Hartmut's name
 Words of love and honor,
 as from her son was fitting.
 He asked a friendly welcome
 for his many knights who on the shore were waiting.
 They bore from him the tidings
 that he across the wave
 Had brought the Hegeling maiden,
 to whom his love he gave
 Ere he had looked upon her,
 and for whom he still was pining.
 When this was heard by Gerlind,
 a happier day on her was never shining.
 Then said he who told it:
 "Lady, you now should ride
 To the sea before the castle,
 where yet the maid doth bide,
 And give her, in her sorrow,
 your love and kindly greeting;
 You and your daughter, Ortrun,
 should haste to the shore, the homeless maiden meeting.
 "Likewise, riding with you
 down unto the flood,
 Should go both maids and women,
 and also warriors good.
 Her you will find in the harbor
 who from home was riven;

Both to the maid and her followers
 a welcome kind by you should now be given."
 Then Queen Gerlind answered:
 "That will I gladly do;
 'Twill make me richly happy
 King Hettel's child to know,
 And to find that, with her maidens,
 she has come to tarry.
 Well I know that Hartmut
 will soon be blest, when he the maid shall marry."
 Then she bade that horses,
 with saddle-cloths, be brought.
 Ortrun, the youthful princess,
 was happy in the thought
 Soon in her father's kingdom
 to see Gu-drun, the maiden,
 If this might truly happen;
 for the speech of all was with her praises laden.
 Then out of chests were taken
 of all the clothes the best
 They knew therein were lying,
 to be worn to meet the guest.
 Soon the knights of Hartmut
 to don the clothes were bidden;
 Erelong a throng of followers,
 gaily bedight, from Gerlind's halls had ridden.
 Upon the third day early,
 women as well as men,
 All who there had gathered
 before Gerlind, their queen,
 To give the maidens welcome,
 were ready and outfitted;
 Out of the gates they crowded,
 and on their steeds not long in the court-yard waited.
 The Normans now with the women
 had into the harbor come:
 The booty they unloaded
 that they would carry home.
 All unto their birthland
 back had come right gladly;
 Gu-drun and her band of maidens,
 alone of all, demeaned themselves but sadly.
 Now the brave Sir Hartmut
 led her forth by the hand,
 If she had deemed it fitting,
 this she had not deigned;
 Yet the poor child, in sorrow,
 took his love but coldly,
 Altho' he showed it warmly,
 and worship more had done freely and boldly.
 With her went sixty maidens
 who over the sea had come:
 One saw, as he beheld them,
 how that all from their home
 Came with proudest bearing.
 They erst high rank had taken,
 In other lands and kingdoms;
 their hearts were heavy now, of bliss forsaken.
 The sister of young Hartmut
 between two barons rode;
 Now to Hilda's daughter
 a welcome warm she showed:
 Ortrun, Ludwig's daughter,
 her eyes now wet with weeping,
 Kissed the homeless maiden,
 while she her fair white hands in her own was keeping.
 Then the wife of Ludwig
 to kiss her, too, was fain,
 But to the youthful maiden
 the thought was full of pain.
 Thus she spake to Gerlind:
 "Why come you here to meet me?

Loath am I to kiss you,
 and neither can I bear that you should greet me.
 "Twas by your own ill-doing
 that I, poor wretched maid,
 Have known no home nor dwelling;
 heart-sorrow long I've had;
 My lot, alas! is shameful,
 and will, I fear, grow harder."
 Then Ortrun strove to soothe her,
 and did her best that with love Gu-drun should reward her.
 One by one she greeted
 the maids on every side.
 Now rose a wondrous shouting;
 men flocked from far and wide:
 Upon the pebbly sea-beach
 stakes for tents were driven;
 With silken ropes were they fastened;
 to Hartmut and his men was shelter in them given.
 To bear the goods from the seaside
 the folk were all astir.
 Gu-drun, fair maiden, sorrowed,
 and pain it gave to her
 To see that all around her
 the Normans were so many;
 Unless it were to Ortrun,
 she never showed a friendly mood to any.
 The maidens on the seashore
 must all the day abide.
 With tears their eyes were flowing,
 whatever others did;
 Dry were they but seldom,
 their cheeks were pale with sorrow:
 Hartmut tried to soothe them,
 but their sadness lasted yet through many a morrow.
 To hold Gu-drun in honor
 was Ortrun ever stern,
 And, e'en if others wronged her,
 with love to her did turn:
 She in her father's kingdom
 strove to make her merry,
 But, far from friends and kindred,
 often the poor young girl was sad and weary.
 To the Normans home was welcome,
 as indeed was right;
 They boasted much of the booty,
 both churl as well as knight,
 Brought from the Hegeling kingdom,
 as they home were turning.
 What welcome glad all gave them
 who ne'er to see them hoped, albeit yearning!
 Soon as Hartmut's warriors
 from all their toil were free,
 And they were fully rested
 from off the stormy sea,
 They quickly left each other,
 for their homes in many places:
 While some their hands were wringing,
 smiles were seen to brighten others' faces.
 Then did Hartmut also
 turn away from the shore,
 And to a stately palace
 the fair Gu-drun he bore.
 Henceforth the youthful maiden
 must tarry there far longer
 Than she to stay was minded,
 and there her woe and pain grew ever stronger.
 When now the high-born maiden
 sat in Hartmut's hall,
 Where his men should crown her,
 then he bade them all
 To be forever faithful,
 and their goodwill to show her;

So would she not forget them,
 but would enrich whoe'er should kindness do her.
 Then spake the mother, Gerlind,
 old King Ludwig's wife:
 "When will Gu-drun be ready
 to share young Hartmut's life,
 Our youthful prince so noble,
 and in her arms to fold him?
 Of her his rank is worthy,
 and ne'er will she be sorry for her lord to hold him."
 Gu-drun to this had listened,
 the wretched, homeless maid;
 She said: "My Lady Gerlind,
 'twould make you sad indeed
 If you must take in wedlock
 one who the lives had wasted
 Of many friends and kinsfolk;
 by toil for him your life were ever blasted."
 "This shall no one hinder,"
 to her then said the queen;
 "Gainsay his will no longer,
 let your love for him be seen,
 And on my head I pledge you
 that rich shall be your guerdon:
 If to be a queen you spurn not,
 you of my crown shall bear the happy burden."
 Then said the sorrowing maiden:
 "That will I never wear;
 Of all his wealth and greatness
 you the tale may spare.
 Your son, the knightly Hartmut,
 my love can ne'er be winning:
 Unwilling here I linger,
 and hence to go I day by day am pining."
 Then the youthful Hartmut,
 who of the land was lord,
 Was angry with the maiden
 when he her answer heard.
 He said: "If, then, to wed her
 the lady granteth never,
 So, also, to the fair one
 shall my goodwill and love be wanting ever."
 Then the wicked Gerlind
 to Hartmut said, in turn:
 "Ever the young and thoughtless
 from the wise should learn.
 Now leave to me this maiden,
 let me for her be caring,
 And I so well shall teach her
 that she will quickly drop her lofty bearing."
 "That will I grant you gladly,"
 Hartmut answering said;
 "Whate'er from this may follow,
 to you I give the maid,
 To have in your good keeping,
 as suits her rank and honor;
 The maid is sad and homeless;
 lady, 'tis right that kindly care be shown her."
 So Gu-drun, the fair one,
 when Hartmut went that day,
 Was left unto his mother,
 and given to her sway:
 But Hilda's youthful daughter
 Gerlind's guidance hated;
 She could not brook her teaching,
 and never her dislike for this abated.
 Then to the lovely maiden
 the old she-devil spake:
 "If you will not live happy,
 then sorrow you must take.
 You have to heat my chamber;
 yourself the fire must kindle;

See, there is none to help you,
 nor may you hope your toil will ever dwindle.”
 The high-born maiden answered:
 “That I well can do;
 Whatever you shall bid me,
 in all must I yield to you,
 Until the God in heaven
 at last my wrongs has righted.
 Never my mother’s daughter
 the fire upon the hearth ere this has lighted.”
 Said Gerlind: “As I’m living,
 to toil must you begin,
 As never queenly daughter
 to do before was seen.
 To be so proud and headstrong
 I will make you weary:
 Before to-morrow darkens,
 your maidens you must leave, and ne’er be merry.
 “You hold yourself too highly,
 as I have heard it said;
 For this shall work most toilsome
 soon upon you be laid.
 This pride and froward bearing
 must be by you forsaken;
 Your lofty mood will I lower,
 and all your hopes will very quickly weaken.”
 Then went the wicked Gerlind
 to court, in anger wild;
 She said to her son, young Hartmut:
 “Hettel’s wilful child
 Scorns both you and your kindred,
 and ever at us is sneering:
 Would we had never seen her,
 if we such talk from her must now be hearing.”
 Then spake unto his mother
 Hartmut, the knight so brave:
 “Pray treat the maiden kindly,
 howe’er she may behave:
 So, for the care you show her,
 my thanks will you be earning.
 Greatly have I wronged her;
 it well may be that she my love is spurning.”
 Then said to him old Gerlind:
 “Whate’er by us is done,
 In mood she is so stubborn
 that she will yield to none.
 Unless we treat her harshly
 she ne’er, as you would have her,
 Will come to you in wedlock;
 this must we do, or else to herself must leave her.”
 Then to her thus answered
 the worthy Norman knight:
 “Good lady, show her kindness
 henceforth in all men’s sight,
 Now for the love you bear me;
 such care I beg you give her
 That from her love and friendship
 the king’s fair daughter may not bar me ever.”
 Then his devilish mother,
 with anger brimming o’er,
 To the throng of Hegeling maidens
 quickly went once more.
 She said: “Make ready, maidens,
 and to your toil betake you,
 To do what you are bidden;
 the task to each that’s given ne’er forsake you.”
 The maidens then were sundered,
 and soon from each other torn;
 They saw not one another,
 and long must live forlorn.
 Those who once so worthily
 lofty rank were taking,

In winding yarn were busied;
 while they sat at work their hearts were aching.
 Some her flax were combing,
 others for her must spin;
 Ladies of lofty breeding,
 whose pastime it had been
 On their silken clothing
 to lay, with skill unsparing,
 Gold and gems most costly,
 these for her now heavy toil were bearing.
 The first in birth among them
 at the court was kept;
 Water she must carry
 to the room where Ortrun slept:
 To wait upon that lady
 the high-born maid was bidden;
 By name was she called Hergart;
 her lofty birth was nought, she still was chidden.
 Among them was another,
 brought from Galicia’s strand;
 The griffin her from Portugal
 had borne to a far-off land.
 She to the Hegeling kingdom
 with Hagen’s child was carried,
 From over Ireland’s borders;
 now with the maids in the Norman land she tarried.
 She was a prince’s daughter,
 who castles owned and lands;
 The fire must now be lighted
 by her, with fair white hands,
 While in the room well heated
 Gerlind’s ladies rested.
 For all the work she was doing
 no thanks on her by them were ever wasted.
 Now you well may wonder
 to hear her sorry plight.
 For Gerlind’s lowest wenches
 she drudged both day and night;
 Whatever task they set her,
 to do must she be willing.
 It helped her not with the Normans
 that she at home a lofty rank was filling.
 The work was mean and shameful
 that they were made to do
 For seven half years and over,
 —this is all too true,—
 Until the young Lord Hartmut,
 when three wars were ended,
 Had come again to his kingdom,
 and found the maids at work, and ill-befriended.
 To see again his loved one
 Hartmut deeply yearned;
 But when he looked upon her,
 the truth he quickly learned,
 That she good food and lodging
 of late had seldom tasted:
 For choosing to live rightly,
 ’twas her reward to be with sorrow wasted.
 When forth she came to meet him,
 to her young Hartmut said:
 “Gu-drun, most lovely maiden,
 what is the life you have led
 Since I, with all my warriors,
 my lands and home was leaving?”
 She said: “Such tasks they set me,
 ’twas sin for you, and shame to me ’twas giving.”
 Then outspoke young Hartmut:
 “Why has this been done,
 Gerlind, my dearest mother?
 Your love she should have known;
 When with you I left her,
 her lot you should have brightened,

And all her heavy sorrows
you should for her within my land have lightened.”
His wolfish mother answered:
“How could I better teach
King Hettel’s ill-bred daughter?
’Twas bootless to beseech,
Nor could I ever bend her,
to make her leave her jeering:
She scorned both you and your father
and kindred, too: to this should you give hearing.”
Then again spake Hartmut:
“Much wrong we’ve done the maid.
Slain by us, her kindred
and many knights lie dead;
While from the lovely maiden
her father we have taken,
Slain by my father, Ludwig,
and now with thoughtless words her woes we waken.”
Then answered him his mother:
“My son, ’tis truth I say;
If we Gu-drun, proud maiden,
for thirty years should pray,
If she with brooms were stricken,
or with rods were beaten,
Your wife we ne’er could make her;
hopeless it is the wayward maid to threaten.”
She farther said to Hartmut:
“However, since you bid,
I’ll gladly treat her better.”
But still her mind she hid,
And Hartmut never knew it;
erelong Gu-drun would find her
Harsher yet than ever;
and now the maiden’s wrongs could no one hinder.
Then went again old Gerlind
to where Gu-drun then sat,
And said to the Hegeling maiden,
in her wrath and hate:
“Twere best you now bethink you,
or else, my fair young maiden,
You with your flowing tresses
must wipe the stools and seats, with dust thick laden.
“Then the room I sleep in,
mark what now I say,
You, to do my bidding,
must sweep three times a day;
You carefully must warm it,
and keep the fire well burning.”
Said she: “That do I gladly,
rather than take a lover I am spurning.”
Whatever she was bidden
the willing maiden did;
No work of hers she slighted,
nor should for aught be chid.
For seven years, full-numbered,
in a land far over the water,
The maid was toiling wearily,
and none did hold her as a kingly daughter.
The years had long been running,
and the ninth was coming on,
When Hartmut to bethink him
wisely had begun,
That indeed ’twas shameful
that he no crown was wearing;
And for himself and his kinsmen
’twas right the name of king he now were bearing.
After heavy fighting,
Hartmut, with his men,
Bearing the prize of bravery,
riding home was seen.
He hoped the love of the maiden
would now to him be granted;

For, more than any other,
he the fair Gu-drun for his true love wanted.
When he reached his homestead,
he bade them bring the maid.
His evil mother, Gerlind,
allowed her to be clad
In meanest clothing only:
Gu-drun but little heeded
The youthful Hartmut’s wooing;
steadfast and true, no love from him she needed.
To him his friends then whispered,
that, whether glad or no
For this might be his mother,
he never should forego
To bend the maid to his wishes;
and must his care be giving
That so he might with the lady
for many a happy day in love be living.
To the ladies’ room he hastened,
when thus his kinsmen spoke,
And there he found the maiden;
her by the hand he took,
And said to her: “Fair lady,
love me now, I pray you,
And sit as queen beside me;
my knights and men shall worship ever pay you.”
Then said the lovely maiden:
“For this I have no mind;
For while the fiendish Gerlind
to me is so unkind,
The love of knights, tho’ worthy,
I can long for never.
To her and all her kindred
henceforth am I a bitter foe forever.”
“Sorry am I,” said Hartmut;
“to you will I make good
The hate my mother Gerlind
to you so harshly showed;
As for both of us is worthy,
your wrongs shall now be righted.”
The high-born maiden answered:
“I trust you not; your word need ne’er be plighted.”
Then said to her young Hartmut,
the lord of the Norman land:
“Gu-drun, most lovely maiden,
you well must understand
Mine are these lands and castles:
to none may you betake you;
Who is there here would hang me
if, ’gainst your will, I now my own should make you?”
Then said King Hettel’s daughter:
“That were a deed of shame:
Of aught so wrong and hateful
never did I dream.
It would be said by princes,
should they the tale be hearing,
That one of the kin of Hagen
Hartmut’s land a harlot’s name is bearing.”
Then did Hartmut answer:
“‘What care I what they say?
If only you, fair lady,
do not say me nay,
A king my men shall see me,
and you my seat be sharing.”
Then said the maid to Hartmut:
“‘That I should love you be you never fearing.
“‘Well you know, Sir Hartmut,
how with me it stands;
And all the wrong and sorrow
I met with at your hands,
When far from home you carried
me whom you had stolen,

And, wounded by your warriors,
 my father's men erewhile in death had fallen.
 "Well known to you 'tis also,
 —for this I mourn again,—
 How my father, Hettel,
 was by your father slain.
 Were I knight, and not a woman,
 he durst not come before me
 Unless his weapons wearing.
 Why wed the man who from my kindred tore me?"
 For many years now bygone,
 it ever was the way,
 No man should take a woman,
 and have her in his sway,
 Unless they both were willing.
 Much praise for this is owing.
 Gu-drun, the homeless maiden,
 her father's loss still mourned, with tears o'erflowing.
 Then spake to her in anger
 Hartmut, the youthful knight:
 "Whatever may befall you,
 I reckon not for your plight;
 Since now you are not willing
 to wear the crown beside me,
 You'll have what you are seeking,
 your meed you'll daily earn, nor need you chide me."
 "That will I earn most gladly,
 as I have done before,
 Though for the men of Hartmut
 the hardest toil I bore,
 And for Queen Gerlind's women.
 If God my wrongs forgetteth,
 To bear them I am willing;
 but heavy is the woe that me besetteth."
 Still they sought to soothe her:
 first to the court they sent
 Young Ortrun, Hartmut's sister,
 whose looks all kindness meant;
 'Twas hoped that she and her maidens,
 now by friendly dealing,
 Would bring Gu-drun, poor lone one,
 to bear towards them all a better feeling.
 Then to his sister Ortrun
 Hartmut freely spake:
 "Wealth I will give you, sister,
 if kindly, for my sake,
 To me you will be helpful,
 and bring Gu-drun, fair lady,
 Soon to forget her sorrows;
 nor o'er her woes to brood be ever ready."
 Then spake the youthful Ortrun,
 the Norman maiden fair:
 "To help both her and her maidens
 shall ever be my care,
 Till they forget their sorrows:
 I bow my head before her,
 And I and mine will hold her
 even as our kin, and watchful love spread o'er her."
 Gu-drun now said to Ortrun:
 "My hearty thanks you win,
 That you, with kindly wishes,
 would see me sit as queen,
 By the side of Hartmut,
 while with pride I'm gladdened:
 For this my trust I give you,
 but homeless, none the less, my days are saddened."

Tale the Twenty-First. HOW GUDRUN MUST WASH CLOTHES ON THE BEACH.

Then to Gu-drun they offered
 castles strong and lands:

Of these would she have nothing.
 So, upon the sands,
 She must wash their clothing,
 from early morn till even.
 Great ill this wrought for Ludwig,
 when he with Herwic in the fight had striven.
 First, Gu-drun was bidden
 to leave her seat, that soon
 She, the high-born maiden,
 should go with fair Ortrun;
 They bade that she be merry,
 and wine with her be drinking.
 The homeless wanderer answered:
 "To make me queen you never need be thinking.
 "Well you wot, Lord Hartmut,
 whate'er your wish may be,
 Betrothed am I to another,
 and am no longer free.
 That I one day shall wed him
 has with an oath been plighted;
 Until by death he's taken
 I will not wed with any man e'er knighted."
 Then spake the lordly Hartmut:
 "You only waste your breath;
 By nought shall we be sundered
 unless it shall be death.
 In friendship with my sister
 you should now be living;
 Your hardships she will lighten,
 and will, I know, her love to you be giving."
 Fain to think was Hartmut
 that her unyielding mood
 Might now by this be softened;
 he hoped, whatever good
 Should e'er befall his sister,
 the maiden would be sharing:
 Thus for both he trusted,
 that a happy life ere long would them be cheering.
 Gu-drun soon greeted kindly
 many a friend and maid.
 Ortrun sat beside her;
 her hue grew rosy-red
 With eating and with drinking,
 ere many days were ended.
 Enough was always ready:
 still the poor girl her mood ne'er wisely mended.
 If Hartmut thought to greet her,
 and spoke in friendly mood,
 How little did it cheer her!
 She o'er her woes did brood,
 That she and all her maidens
 in a far-off land were bearing.
 Soon, against young Hartmut,
 of harsh and angry words she was not sparing.
 So long a time this lasted,
 the king at length was wroth;
 He said: "Gu-drun, fair lady,
 as good am I in birth
 As is the young King Herwic,
 who now you think is fitter
 Than I to be your lover:
 too much you jeer at me, with words most bitter.
 "If you would leave your sorrow,
 for both of us 'twere gain.
 It wounds me out of measure
 when any gives you pain,
 Or seeks your heart to burden,
 or in your wish to cross you:
 Though now you are unfriendly,
 to be my queen I yet would gladly choose you."
 Then young Hartmut left her,
 and straight his men he sought.

He bade them to be watchful
 of ills that threatened aught,
 And well to guard his kingdom;
 for he the while bethought him,
 So sorely was he hated,
 'twas much to fear some harm would yet be wrought him.
 The cross and wicked Gerlind
 for her hard tasks did set;
 She on a seat but seldom
 any rest did get.
 Erst 'mong princes' daughters
 men were wont to greet her,
 As for her was rightful;
 now with the scorned and lowly they must meet her.
 To her, in mood unfriendly,
 the old she-wolf then spake:
 "Now Queen Hilda's daughter
 I a drudge will make;
 Although her evil feelings
 seem so strong and steady,
 We yet shall see her toiling
 as ne'er before to do has she been ready."
 Then said the high-born maiden:
 "To work with all my might,
 With hand and heart, I'm willing;
 in this, both day and night,
 Will I be always busy,
 and every hour be striving;
 Since ill-luck begrudges
 that I among my friends should now be living."
 The wicked Gerlind answered:
 "Now daily to the beach
 You my clothes must carry,
 there on the sands to bleach.
 You must for me and my maidens
 be washing and be drying;
 And that no one find you idle,
 your work with care you ever must be plying."
 Then spake the high-born maiden:
 "Wife of a mighty king,
 If they will only teach me
 the way to wash and wring,
 And how to cleanse your clothing,
 to do it I am willing.
 Bliss no more I look for;
 still greater woe my heart must yet be filling.
 "Bid them now to teach me,
 and I will gladly learn;
 So high I do not hold me
 that I the task should spurn.
 Thus shall I be earning
 the food I here am eating;
 Nought I say against it."
 The poor Gu-drun her lot was wisely meeting.
 Then by a washerwoman
 clothes to the sands were brought,
 And how to wash and dry them
 the maiden now was taught.
 Much at first she sorrowed,
 and by the work was flurried,
 Yet was she spared by no one.
 So was the fair Gu-drun by Gerlind worried.
 Before King Ludwig's castle,
 she gained a skilful hand;
 For knights who there were dwelling
 within the Norman land,
 None could be more helpful,
 their clothing better washing.
 Loudly mourned her maidens
 to see her toiling where the waves were dashing.
 One there was among them
 who was also a great king's child;

The wailing of the others
 was to hers a whisper mild.
 This work so mean and lowly
 went to their hearts too nearly,
 As they saw the high-born lady
 drudging on the shore, both late and early.
 Then with love true-hearted
 Hildeburg made moan:
 "Well we all must rue it—
 to God may this be known—
 Who in this Norman kingdom
 erst with Gu-drun were landing;
 No rest ought we to hope for
 while on the sea-beach washing she is standing."
 This was heard by Gerlind,
 who in anger spoke:
 "If on the toils of your lady
 with such ill-will you look,
 The work shall you be doing,
 and her place be filling."
 "That would I do right gladly,"
 said Hildeburg, "if only you were willing.
 "For the love of God Almighty,
 Gerlind, my lady queen,
 Let not this great king's daughter
 toiling alone be seen:
 A crown, too, wore my father,
 yet work would I be doing;
 Let me with her stand washing,
 whatever good or ill we may be knowing.
 "It fills my heart with sorrow,
 I feel her woes my own.
 Once the greatest honor
 to her by God was shown:
 Her forefathers and kindred
 were kings, and none were higher;
 Though now her work is lowly,
 to toil with the maiden I shall never tire."
 Then said the wicked Gerlind:
 "This oft will bring you pain;
 However hard the winter,
 still in snow and rain
 My clothes must you be washing,
 altho' cold winds are blowing;
 So will you be wishing
 that you the warmth of heated rooms were knowing."
 Unwillingly she waited
 until the night drew near;
 From this Gu-drun the high-born
 gained at last some cheer.
 Then into her bedroom
 went Hildeburg in sorrow;
 There they wept together
 for the work that they must do upon the morrow.
 Then the Lady Hildeburg
 said to her in tears:
 "The woes that you are bearing
 my heart with you now shares;
 I begged the old she-devil
 no more alone to leave you
 Upon the sea-sands washing;
 with you I'll bear the burden, and my help will give you."
 The homeless maiden answered:
 "May Christ your love reward,
 That you with so much sorrow
 of all my woes have heard.
 If we may wash together,
 the days will be the brighter,
 And time will seem far shorter,
 and on our hearts the shame will weigh the lighter."
 Soon as her wish was granted,
 down to the sandy shore

The clothing then she carried,
 gladness to know no more.
 There must they wash in sorrow,
 whatever was the weather;
 Whate'er was done by others,
 yet still these two must wash and toil together.
 When her throng of handmaidens
 had time from work to spare,
 Bitter was their weeping,
 to see her standing there
 Upon the sea-sands washing.
 Loud were their moans and many,
 Nor did their sorrow lessen;
 greater woe was never known by any.
 Long the toiling lasted,—
 that is true enough;
 There must they be working
 full five years and a half.
 Clothes for Hartmut's followers
 they must wash and whiten:
 Ne'er were maidens sadder;
 their toils before the castle nought could lighten.

Tale the Twenty-Second. HOW HILDA MADE WAR TO BRING BACK HER DAUGHTER.

We now will speak no longer
 of the toil the maidens bore
 For knights as well as ladies.
 Queen Hilda evermore
 Her thoughts to this had given
 how to win back her daughter,
 Out of the Norman kingdom,
 whither from home the daring Hartmut brought her.
 First were workmen bidden,
 near to the deep sea-flood,
 Of ships to build her seven,
 strong, well made, and good;
 With two-and-twenty barges,
 broad, with both ends rounded.
 Whate'er for them was needed
 was quickly brought, and everything abounded.
 Forty galleys also
 lay upon the sea;
 On these her eyes were feeding,
 Longing great had she
 To see the throng of fighters
 who should soon be sailing.
 She their food made ready;
 for this the knights her praise were loudly telling.
 The time was drawing nearer,
 when now to cross the sea
 No more should they be waiting,
 who wished the maids to free,
 That in a far-off kingdom
 in hardest toil were living.
 Now Hilda sent for her liegemen;
 to those who called them clothes she first was giving.
 The day that she had chosen
 was at the Christmas-tide,
 When they must seek the foemen
 by whom King Hettel died.
 Forthwith to friends and kinsmen
 Hilda gave her bidding,
 That they to bring her daughter
 back from the Norman land must then be speeding.
 Trusty men were bidden
 by Hilda first to go
 To Herwic and his followers,
 that one and all should know
 Of the inroad on the Normans
 that she had sworn and plotted.

To many Hegeling children
 this erelong an orphan's life allotted.
 The men sent out by Hilda
 to Herwic rode in haste:
 For what they then were coming
 the king full quickly guessed;
 Then went he forth to meet them,
 soon as he saw them nearing;
 Gladly them he greeted,
 and soon from them Queen Hilda's wish was hearing.
 "Well you know, Lord Herwic,
 our woe and plight forlorn,
 And how the Hegeling warriors
 to help the queen have sworn.
 Yourself Queen Hilda trusteth
 more than any other;
 To none Gu-drun is dearer,—
 the homeless maid, long sundered from her mother."
 The well-born knight thus answered:
 "I know in truth too well
 How Hartmut had the boldness
 my fair betrothed to steal,
 Because his love she slighted,
 and hearkened to my wooing;
 For this Gu-drun, my lady,
 her father lost, and still her lot is ruing.
 "My pledge and hearty greeting
 bear to your lady good;
 No more the Norman Hartmut
 by me shall be allowed
 To hold so long in bondage
 my own betrothed maiden:
 For me, of all, 'tis fittest
 to bring the lady home, our lives to gladden.
 "To Hilda and her kinsmen
 this answer you may say:
 When Christmas time is over,
 on the sixth-and-twentieth day,
 I will ride to the Hegelings,
 three thousand fighters taking."
 Then the men of Hilda
 waited no more, but home their way were making.
 Now Herwic made him ready,
 and to the strife gave thought,
 With many faithful liegemen
 who oft had bravely fought.
 Those who to go were willing
 he for war outfitted;
 Though wintry was the weather,
 they to take the field no longer waited.
 Of help the widowed Hilda
 sorely felt the need:
 Soon to her friends in Denmark
 she sent her men with speed,
 To tell the knights and warriors
 no more at home to tarry;
 For they to the Norman kingdom
 must ride, to free Gu-drun from bondage dreary.
 They bore to the youthful Horant
 this errand from the queen:
 That he and all his kinsmen
 were to her lord of kin,
 And the sorrows of her daughter
 should by them be heeded;
 For death to her were better
 than ever that her child to Hartmut should be wedded.
 Then sent the knight this answer:
 "Unto Queen Hilda say,—
 Though yet 'twill cost to women
 many a bitter day,
 I still, with all my followers,
 will help be gladly giving;

For this will be heard the weeping
of many a mother's child, in the land now living.
"I bid you now, moreover,
to say unto the queen,—
Ere many days are ended,
in her land will I be seen;
Tell her that my wishes
all to war are bending,
And soon ten thousand warriors
from out the Danish land will I be sending."
The men sent there by Hilda
of Horant took their leave:
They sped to the Waalisch marches,
and found Morunc the brave
With all his men about him,
a margrave rich and daring.
He gladly saw them coming,
and of a loving welcome was not sparing.
Then spake the knightly Irold:
"Since now by me 'tis known
That into the Hegeling kingdom,
before seven weeks are gone,
I with all my followers
am bidden to be riding,
For this will I be ready,
whatever luck be there for us betiding."
The news was spread by Morunc,
within the Holstein land,
That Hilda now was sending
for all her friends at hand;
He said that all good warriors
must the field be taking.
To the Danish knight, brave Fru-te,
they also gave the word, his help bespeaking.
The worthy knight, then answering,
his ready will did show:
"Back to her home will we bring her.
Thirteen years ago,
We swore the land of the Normans
should with war be wasted;
'Twas then the friends of Hartmut
stole the maid Gu-drun, and homeward hasted."
Wâ-te, the knight from Sturmland,
to this at once gave thought,
How he might also help her.
Altho' he yet knew nought
Of the word that Hilda sent him,
yet he at once bestirred him;
Of his knights a goodly number
then in haste he called, who gladly heard him.
All of them were busy
with care for the coming war;
Wâ-te the old from Sturmland
brought from near and far
Full a thousand kinsmen,
for the fight well fitted;
With these he hoped that Hartmut
would soon be overcome and be outwitted.
The sad and homeless women
in toil and pain were kept
By the cross and evil Gerlind:
but fewer wrongs were heaped
Upon the Lady Hergart;
(this name to her was given:)
She loved the king's high cup-bearer,
and greatly hoped to be a princess even.
For this fair Hilda's daughter
often sorely wept;
And Hergart, too, yet later
woe and sorrow reaped,
Because she ne'er with others
would their toils be sharing.

Whate'er to her might happen,
Gu-drun for all her ills was little caring.
Of the Hegelings none were idle,
as you before have heard:
Tho' many for all their toiling
would find but scant reward,
Yet all within the kingdom their
ready help were lending.
Now the knights were thinking
for the brother of Gu-drun 'twere best they should be sending.
Riders then went swiftly
into the land of the North,
And found in an open meadow
the youth of kingly birth,
Where by the edge of a river
many birds were flocking:
There with his trusty falconer
he showed his skill, and spent his time in hawking.
As soon as, riding quickly,
these by him were seen,
He said: "Those men now coming
are sent to us by the queen:
They come to give her bidding,
proudly hither hasting;
My mother thinketh wrongly
that we the war forget, and time are wasting."
He set his hawk a-flying,
and thence at once he rode.
Very soon thereafter
darkened was his mood;
For when the men he greeted,
and they their tale were telling,
He learned that the queen, his mother,
ever in tears her loss was aye bewailing.
She to the youthful warrior
sent her greeting kind:
In her wretched lot, she asked him
what might be his mind;
And asked how many followers
he could to the war be leading;
For from the Hegeling kingdom
they all to the Norman land must soon be speeding.
Then Ortwin sent this answer:
"Me dost thou rightly bid;
I from hence will hasten,
and bring from far and wide
Twenty thousand fighters,—
men both brave and daring;
These my steps will follow
even to death, their lives and homes forswearing."
Now from every border
many warriors went
Riding to Hilda's kingdom,
for whom the queen had sent;
They vied with one another,
to win her praises striving.
Not less than sixty thousand
together came, their help for Hilda giving.
On the river Waal Sir Morunc
had upon the wave
Of broad-built ships full sixty,
strong to bear the brave
Who with the Hegelings sailing
would o'er the sea be carried,
To free Gu-drun, the maiden,
who sadly now among the Normans tarried.
From out the Northland also
finest ships were brought,
With horses and with clothing,
as good as could be sought:
Decked were all the helmets,
the weapons glittered brightly,

Ready for the onset
 bravely they came, in armor fair and knightly.
 Now by their shields men reckoned
 how many there might be
 Who to the Norman kingdom
 would go the maid to free,
 And to the great Queen Hilda
 their help to give were ready;
 They numbered seventy thousand;
 gifts to all were given by the queenly lady.
 On all who there were gathered,
 or to court who later came,
 The queen, though ever mournful,
 yet let her kindness beam:
 She gave them hearty welcome,
 and every one she greeted;
 Wondrous was the clothing
 that to the chosen knights Queen Hilda meted.
 The many ships of Hilda
 were stored with all things well,
 And early on the morrow
 were ready thence to sail;
 Seemly was the outfit
 for her worthy guests who waited:
 They chose not to be going,
 while aught they lacked to meet the foeman hated.
 They put on board the weapons,
 as was the queen's behest,
 And with them many helmets
 of beaten steel the best.
 Hauberks white were given,
 besides the ones in wearing,
 For warriors full five hundred;
 these she bade them take, to war now faring.
 Their anchor-ropes well twisted
 of strongest silk were made:
 Their sails both rich and showy
 to the winds were spread;
 These to the shores of the Norman
 the Hegelings would carry,
 Who back to Lady Hilda
 would gladly bring Gu-drun, of waiting weary.
 The anchors for the sailors
 were not of iron made,
 But of bell-metal moulded;
 (so have we heard it said:)
 They with Spanish brasses
 all were bound and strengthened,
 That loadstones should not hold them,
 and so the sailors' way by this be lengthened.
 To Wâ-te and his followers
 the Lady Hilda gave
 Many clasps and arm-bands.
 This roused the strong and brave
 To meet their death from foemen,
 for the Hegelings fighting,
 When they from Hartmut's castle
 strove to wrest the maid, in bondage sitting.
 Freely then and earnestly
 Queen Hilda spoke her thought
 Unto the men from Daneland:
 "When you have bravely fought
 On the stormy field of warfare,
 I will reward you fitly.
 Still my banner follow;
 that will show the way, and lead you rightly."
 They asked of her, who held it;
 to this then answered she:
 "He bears the name of Horant;
 a Danish lord is he.
 His mother, Hettel's sister,
 she it was who bore him;

Let him by you be trusted;
 forsake him not in fight with foes before him.
 "Never, my hardy warriors,
 must you forget my son,
 Young Ortwin, dear-belovéd,
 to manhood nearly grown.
 Of life the youth has numbered
 twenty years already;
 If any risk should threaten,
 to guard him well then let your help be speedy."
 To this they pledged them gladly,
 and all together said,
 So long as they were with him
 nought had he to dread;
 If he their lead would follow,
 those from whom he parted
 Again unharmed would see him.
 At this young Ortwin showed himself light-hearted.
 Soon the ships were laden
 with goods of every kind,
 And now to tell his wonder
 none fit words could find.
 They asked good Hilda's blessing
 on the work now undertaken;
 The queen then begged of Heaven
 that they by Christ should never be forsaken.
 Many youths went with them
 whose fathers erst were slain;
 Now bereft, these brave ones
 to right their wrongs were fain.
 The women of the Hegelings
 were mourning all and weeping,
 Beseeching God in Heaven
 to bring them back their sons in his holy keeping.
 But all this pain and sorrow
 the warriors might not bear;
 They sternly bade the women
 their bitter wails to spare;
 Then on their way they started
 in gladness, shouting loudly,
 And as they went on shipboard
 all were heard to sing, and set forth proudly.
 After these daring sailors
 had cast off from the land,
 Many sorrowing women
 did at the windows stand:
 From Matelan's lofty castle,
 never the watch forsaking,
 Their eyes the sea-path followed,
 as from the land the men their way were taking.
 A friendly wind was blowing,
 and loudly cracked the mast;
 They the sails stretched tightly,
 and left the land at last.
 The son of many a mother
 went, for honor seeking;
 Though this awaited many,
 yet to gain it they must toil be taking.
 I cannot tell you fully
 of all that them befell,
 Save that the lord of Karadie,
 who in that land did dwell,
 With fighters came to help them,
 the foeman never fearing;
 He from home brought with him
 ten thousand knights, all men of strength and daring.
 Where foes upon the Wulpensand
 had met in deadly fray,
 These knights from many a kingdom,
 now, at this later day,
 Chose the spot for meeting;
 and here they came together:

A church had here been builded,
 and old and young alike had their gifts brought hither.
 Now within its harbor,
 to seek their fathers' graves,
 Out of the ships here gathered
 went many of Hilda's braves.
 Bitter was their sorrow,
 and anger keen did waken;
 Hard would it be for any
 who erst in fight the lives of their friends had taken.
 Unto the lord of Moorland
 they hearty welcome gave.
 Four and twenty broad-boats
 he brought with warriors brave;
 Food therein was laden
 that might for all have lasted
 Till twenty years were ended:
 to war with the Normans now they gladly hasted.
 When they to sail were ready,
 they left the sheltering shore
 To make their way o'er the waters;
 but heavy toil they bore
 Upon the wild sea-billows
 before their sail was ended.
 What helped it that their leaders,
 Fru-te the Dane and Wâ-te, them befriended?
 A wind from the south was blowing,
 and drove them out to sea.
 The crew of warlike shipmates
 from fear no more were free;
 They could not find the bottom,
 altho' they should be casting
 Lengths of rope a thousand;
 many sailors wept, their lot foretasting.
 Before the mount at Givers
 soon lay Queen Hilda's host;
 However good their anchors,
 upon that gloomy coast,
 Drawn by loadstones thither,
 they a long time rested.
 Their masts so tough and hardy
 soon before their eyes went bent and twisted.
 When now the hopeless sailors
 were weeping o'er their lot,
 Thus spoke the aged Wâ-te:
 "Anchors again throw out,
 The strongest and the heaviest,
 into the sea unsounded.
 I've heard of many wonders
 I would rather see, than here on the rocks be grounded.
 "Since, astray long sailing,
 our lady's ships here lie,
 And we so far are driven
 across the darkling sea,
 I now will tell a sea-tale,
 that stirred my childish wonder,
 Of how, near the mount at Givers,
 a kingdom erst was built by a mighty founder.
 "Men there in wealth are living;
 so rich is all their land
 That under the flowing rivers
 silver is the sand;
 With this they make their castles,
 and the stones are golden
 With which their walls are builded.
 In all the kingdom none in want are holden.
 "'Twas told to me, moreover,
 (by God are wonders wrought,)
 If one who by the loadstone
 unto this mount is brought,
 Here will only tarry
 till the wind from the land is blowing,

He with all his kindred
 may be forever rich when homeward going.
 "Let us our food be eating
 until our luck shall turn,"
 Said then the aged Wâ-te;
 "before we hence are borne,
 Our ships that here are lying
 shall with ore be loaded:
 When this we home shall carry,
 wealth shall we have that no one e'er foreboded."
 Then spake the Danish Fru-te:
 "A still, unruffled sea
 Shall never keep in idleness
 the men now here with me:
 A thousand times I swear to you,
 no gold would I be seeking,
 But rather away from this mountain,
 with friendly winds, would I my way be taking."
 The Christian men among them
 raised to Heaven a prayer;
 But yet the ships ne'er yielded,
 strongly fastened there:
 For four long days or over
 all their hopes were thwarted;
 Sorely feared the Hegelings
 that they from thence could nevermore be started.
 The clouds now lifted higher,
 as the mighty God had willed;
 Then no more they sorrowed,
 for soon the waves were stilled,
 And from out the darkness
 the sun was shining brightly.
 A wind from the west was blowing,
 and now the woes were o'er of the wanderers knightly.
 For miles full six and twenty,
 past Givers' craggy shore,
 The ships at last were wafted.
 By this they saw yet more
 The work of God and his goodness,
 in all the help then given.
 Wâ-te with his followers
 had been too near the rocks of loadstone driven.
 To smoothly flowing waters
 they now were come at last:
 Their sins were not rewarded,
 and all their woes were past,
 While fear from them was taken,
 since God was not unwilling.
 The ships that bore the warriors
 straight to the Norman land at length were sailing.
 But soon among the sailors
 arose again a wail;
 For now the ships were groaning,
 and soon began to reel,
 Tossed among the breakers
 that overwhelmed them nearly:
 Then said the brave knight Ortwin:
 "We now indeed must buy our honors dearly."
 Outspake then one of the sailors:
 "Alas! and well-a-day!
 I would we were at Givers,
 and dead near its mountain lay!
 If one is by God forgotten,
 by whom is he befriended?
 My brave and hardy warriors,
 the roar of the blustering sea is not yet ended."
 Then cried the knight, Sir Horant,
 he of the Danish land:
 "Be of good heart, brave fellows;
 I well can understand
 This wind no harm will do us;
 from out the west 'tis blowing."

This cheered the lord of Karadie,
on him and on his men fresh hope bestowing.
Horant, the daring warrior,
up to the topmast climbed,
And the widely stretching billows
swept, with eyes undimmed,
Keeping for land an outlook.
They soon his call were hearing:
"Wait you now, unfearing;
I see that we the Norman land are nearing!"
The word to all was given,
that they should lower sail:
Searching the waters over,
they saw far off a hill,
Lofty, and thickly wooded,
with groves and leafage shaded;
Then old Wâ-te bade them
thither to bend their way, and this they heeded.

Tale the Twenty-Third. HOW HILDA'S WARRIORS LANDED IN SIGHT OF HARTMUT'S KINGDOM.

Before the hill they landed,
in sight of the leafy grove;
Wary to be, and daring,
them did it now behoove.
First they dropped their anchors,
deep the waters under;
In a lonely spot were they hidden,
where none could see, nor at their coming wonder.
Then from the ships, to rest them,
they stepped upon the beach.
Hey! what they had longed for
was now within their reach!
A stream of pure, cold water,
through the fir-trees flowing,
Ran down the wooded hillside,
upon the wave-worn knights new life bestowing.
While the weary warriors
were resting and asleep,
Irold soon had clambered,
there his watch to keep,
Into a tree high-branching.
He then began to ponder
Which way they should be taking;
and, lo! the Norman land he saw with wonder.
"Now, my youths, be merry!"
thus cried the youthful knight.
"My cares indeed are lightened,
for now I have in sight
Seven lofty palaces,
with roomy halls wide-spreading;
Before to-morrow's midday,
the land of Normandy shall we be treading."
Then said the wise old Wâ-te:
"Up to the sands now bear
All your shields and weapons,
whate'er in fight you wear.
Let every one be busy,
and let the youths be hastened;
At once lead out the horses;
helmets and breastplates must with straps be fastened.
"And now, if any outfits
are not good to wear,
Nor meet for you in fighting,
to that I'll give my care.
The queen, my lady Hilda,
has sent with us already
Full five hundred breastplates;
these will we give to any who are needy."
Quickly were the horses
forth on the sea-beach led;

And all the showy horse-cloths,
that should on them be spread,
Were by the men unfolded,
and laid on steeds in waiting,
To see which best besemed them;
and each then took the one he deemed most fitting.
In leaping, and in galloping
up and down the shore,
They rode, and watched the horses;
many, strong before,
Now were dull and sluggish,
nor longer quick at running;
Too long had they been standing,
and Wâ-te had them killed, as not worth owning.
Fires by the men were lighted;
and good and hearty food,
The best that could be met with
so near the shore and flood,
By the tired and hungry wanderers
soon was cooked and eaten.
They had not hoped beforehand
that rest like this their toilsome life would sweeten.
Throughout the night they rested,
till dawn of the coming day.
To Ortwin Wâ-te and Fru-te
each his mind did say;
Talking aside on the seashore,
many a threat was spoken
Against their Norman foemen,
who into the Hegeling castle erst had broken.
"Men must we now be sending,"
to them young Ortwin said,
"Who shall tidings bring us,
if they be not yet dead,
About my long-lost sister
and many a homeless maiden;
For when on them I'm thinking,
my heart is heavy, oft with sorrow laden."
Together they bethought them,
whom they hence should send,
By whom the news they wished for
might with truth be gained,
And who could tell them rightly
where to find the maiden;
By them, too, must the errand
on which they came, from foes be wisely hidden.
Then spake the youthful Ortwin,
who from Ortland came,
A faithful knight as any:
"Myself for the search I name;
The maid, Gu-drun, is my sister,
child of my father and mother;
Of all, however worthy,
am I more fit to go than any other."
Then spake the kingly Herwic:
"I too will go with thee;
To live or die I am ready,
seeking the maid to free.
To you she is a sister,
but to me for a wife they gave her;
To her am I ever faithful,
nor for a day uncared-for will I leave her."
Then quoth Wâ-te angrily:
"'Tis childish thus to speak,
Brave and chosen warriors:
such risks you should not seek,
And this for truth I tell you.
Spurn you not my warning;
Should you be found by Hartmut,
you'll on his gallows hang, your rashness mourning."
To him King Herwic answered:
"Though good or ill betide,

Friends should aye be friendly,
 standing side by side.
 I and my friend, young Ortwin,
 will ne'er the task give over,
 Whatever shall befall us,
 and search will make till we Gu-drun recover."
 When now upon this errand
 both were bent to go,
 They sent for friends and kinsfolk,
 and did their wishes show.
 They bade them to be faithful,
 and said the oaths then taken
 Must never be forgotten,
 and they who went must never be forsaken.
 "Of your pledges I remind you,"
 the youthful Ortwin said:
 "If we, by foemen taken,
 should be in bondage led,
 You with gold must free us,
 and so our bonds must loosen;
 Lands must you sell and castles,
 nor ever sorrow feel that thus you've chosen.
 "And, warriors brave, now hearken
 to what we more will say;
 If foes our life begrudge us,
 and us in fight shall slay,
 Be not our death forgotten,
 let it on them be wroken:
 Your swords in Hartmut's kingdom
 must make your daring there be loudly spoken.
 "This we further bid you,
 my good and well-born knights:
 E'en though, with toil the hardest,
 every warrior fights,
 Let not those homeless maidens
 be by you forsaken;
 Until the strife is settled,
 let not their hope and trust in you be shaken."
 Their faith then freely pledging,
 each gave to the king his hand;
 And all the best among them
 swore that home and land
 They nevermore would look on,
 but still afar would tarry,
 Until again to their homesteads
 they from the Norman land the maids should carry.
 All of them were faithful,
 but yet were weeping sore;
 They feared the hate of Ludwig,
 and ills for them in store.
 That they could send no others
 they were deeply mourning;
 And all were sadly thinking,
 "No one now can death from them be turning."
 All day they talked together;
 it now was near its end:
 The sun, that low was sinking,
 thro' clouds its beams did send:
 Erelong it sank o'er Gulstred,
 and there at last was hidden.
 Ortwin and Herwic tarried,
 that night to go, by the waning light forbidden.

Tale the Twenty-fourth. HOW THEIR COMING WAS MADE KNOWN TO GUDRUN.

Of them we speak no longer;
 we now will let you hear
 Yet more about the maidens:
 how hope their lot did cheer
 Who on a far-off seashore
 must wearily toil at washing:

Gu-drun and Hildeburg
 must wash all day on the sands where waves were dashing.
 'Twas the time of spring-tide fasting,
 and at the noon of day.
 To them a swan came floating;
 thereat Gu-drun 'gan say:
 "O bird so fair and lovely,
 such pain for me thou art feeling,
 That now thou hither speedest
 from a far-off land, across the water sailing."
 Then to her in answer
 spake the friendly swan,
 Although a God-sent angel,
 in speech most like a man:
 "Words from God I bring you;
 if you for this be seeking,
 Tidings I give of your kindred;
 of these, most high-born maid, would I be speaking."
 When the lovely maiden
 his speech so wondrous heard,
 Scarce could she believe it,
 that thus an untamed bird,
 Now, within her hearing,
 in tones like these had spoken.
 While to him she listened,
 it seemed that his words from the mouth of a man had broken.
 Then said the bird-like angel:
 "Hopeful you now may be,
 Homeless, sorrowing maiden;
 gladness shall come to thee.
 If you would hear of your birth-land,
 listen while I tell you;
 From there I bring you tidings,
 for God hath sent me, of your woes to heal you."
 At this, Gu-drun, the fair one,
 upon the sands down fell;
 Crossing her arms, the maiden
 her lowly prayers did tell.
 Then she said to Hildeburg:
 "God hath us in his keeping,
 And help to us has granted;
 we now no more shall sorrow know, nor weeping."
 To the bird then said the maiden:
 "Christ has sent thee here
 To us, poor homeless maidens,
 our heavy hearts to cheer;
 Good and trusted harbinger,
 tidings tell yet other:
 Is now Queen Hilda living?
 Of poor Gu-drun is she the much-loved mother."
 The Heaven-sent bird thus answered:
 "This can I say to thee;
 Hilda, thy queenly mother,
 in health did I lately see.
 To search for thee already
 her warriors she has banded;
 Such throngs no kin or widow,
 seeking for friends, on foeman's shore e'er landed."
 Then spake the high-born maiden:
 "Good tidings thou dost bear:
 Be thou with me not weary,
 still more I fain would hear.
 Lives yet my brother Ortwin,
 as king in Ortlund dwelling,
 And Herwic, my betrothed?
 'Twould gladden me could'st thou this news be telling."
 The bird-like angel answered:
 "That can I gladly tell;
 Herwic and young King Ortwin
 are both alive and well.
 Upon the swelling billows,
 that rose and sank unending,

I saw those knightly sailors;
 each with even stroke to his oar was bending.”
 She said: “This tell me also,
 if ’tis known to thee,
 Whether Morunc and Irold
 are now upon the sea,
 And hither come to seek me;
 the truth I fain would gather.
 Gladly I would see them,
 for they are kin to Hettel, who was my father.”
 To her the bird thus answered:
 “That can I tell you, too;
 Morunc, and with him Irold,
 I saw, in search of you.
 They to this land are coming;
 their help will soon be given
 To fight for you, fair lady,
 and many a helmet will by them be riven.”
 Then spake the winged angel:
 “I bid you now farewell,
 And leave you in God’s keeping,
 for work awaits me still.
 I overstay my errand
 to linger here, yet speaking.”
 Then from their sight he faded,
 and left the maidens’ hearts well-nigh to breaking.
 Then said Hilda’s daughter:
 “My sorrows none can know;
 Much that I wished to ask thee,
 now must I forego.
 For the sake of Christ, I beg thee,
 ere thou alone dost leave me,
 Poor and wretched maiden,
 that freedom from my woes thou yet wilt give me.”
 Before her eyes he floated,
 and once again he spake:
 “Ere yet we two are parted,
 and hence my way I take,
 If I in aught can help you,
 of that I will not weary,
 And, since through Christ you ask it,
 to tell you of your kin will longer tarry.”
 She said: “I fain were hearing,
 if thou the truth hast learned,
 If Horant, lord of Denmark,
 his way has hither turned,
 And with him leads his kinsmen?
 They leave me here forsaken.
 Knowing him brave and daring,
 I would my lonely lot his care might waken.”
 “From Denmark sailing hither,
 Horant, your kinsman, comes;
 He to war is leading
 his followers from their homes.
 The banner of Queen Hilda
 aloft in his hand he is bearing;
 ’Tis thus the Hegeling warriors
 now the Norman Hartmut’s land are nearing.”
 Gu-drun then asked him further:
 “This would I also hear:
 Lives Wâ-te still of Sturmland?
 If so, no more I fear.
 We all might then be happy,
 if thou could’st this be telling,—
 That under the flag of my mother
 he and the aged Fru-te are hither sailing.”
 To her the angel answered:
 “Hither comes in haste
 Wâ-te the old from Sturmland.
 He in his hand holds fast
 The strong and guiding rudder,
 and Fru-te’s ship is steering.

Truer friends or better
 you ne’er need wish their swords for you were bearing.”
 Once more the bird was ready
 upon his way to go;
 Then said the wretched maiden:
 “I still am full of woe;
 And now to know am longing—
 if life such bliss can lend me—
 When I, poor homeless maiden,
 shall see my mother’s knights, whom she doth send me.”
 The angel answered quickly:
 “Your happiness is near;
 To-morrow morning early,
 will two brave knights be here.
 Both are true and upright,
 and falsehood ne’er will tell you;
 Whatever news they bring you
 you well may trust, and never will it fail you.”
 At last the heavenly angel
 hence in truth must go:
 From him the homeless maidens
 sought no more to know.
 In mind they ever wavered,
 ’twixt hope and fear still tossing;
 Where their helpers lingered
 they could not know, yet trust were never losing.
 Lazily and slowly
 they washed the livelong day;
 Of knights sent there by Hilda,
 who now were on their way
 From over the Hegeling border,
 busily they chatted:
 Gu-drun’s good, faithful kinsmen
 were by the long-lost maids uneasily awaited.
 Each day must have its ending;
 to the castle now must go
 The weary, homesick maidens.
 They there must harshness know
 From evil-minded Gerlind,
 who their lives still harrowed;
 A day went by but seldom
 that she scolded them not, nor still their bondage narrowed.
 Thus she spoke to the maidens:
 “Who gave the word to you
 That you might wash so slowly
 my clothes and linen, too?
 All the things I gave you
 must be quickly whitened;
 ’Twere best that you be careful,
 you else shall weep, and for your lives be frightened.”
 Then answered her young Hildeburg:
 “Our work we ever mind;
 Truly you ought, fair lady,
 to be to us more kind.
 We oft are almost freezing,
 with water o’er us splashing;
 If only the winds were warmer,
 we might for you far better then be washing.”
 Grimly answered Gerlind,
 and roughly them did twit:
 “Whatever be the weather,
 my work you may not slight.
 Early must you be washing,
 nor rest till night be knowing;
 To-morrow morn, at daybreak,
 you from my room must down to the beach be going.
 “I ween you know already
 that Holytide is near;
 Palm-Sunday soon is coming,
 and guests will then be here:
 If to ill-washed clothing
 my knights shall then be treated,

Never in kingly castle
to those who washed have woes like yours been meted.”
Then the maidens left her;
they laid aside, all wet,
The clothing they were wearing—
they better care should get.
All they had known of kindness
for them no longer lasted,
And soon for this they sorrowed,
for bread and water now was all they tasted.
Now the downcast maidens
for sleep had sought their bed;
But this was not the softest,
and each one, in her need,
A dirty shirt was wearing.
Thus was Gerlind showing
Her care and kindness for them,
on benches hard a pillow ne’er bestowing.
Never Gu-drun, poor maiden,
on a harder bed had lain;
All were tired with watching
till day should dawn again.
They had but broken slumber;
I ween, they oft bethought them
How soon the knights were coming,
of whom the angel-bird the news had brought them.
Soon as the morning lightened,
Hildeburg the good,
Erst from Galicia stolen,
at the window gazing stood;
All night she slept but little,
but on her bed lay tossing.
She saw that snow had fallen,
and hope the heart-sick maid was wellnigh losing.
Then spake the hapless maiden:
“To wash we now must go.
Should God not change the weather,
and we, in storm and snow,
To-day must stand a-washing,
before the evening cometh
We, all chilled and barefoot,
shall dead be found, while us the cold benumbeth.”
By hope they yet were gladdened,
e’en as they well might be,
That those sent out by Hilda
they ere night should see.
When the lovely maidens
upon this thought were dwelling,
It made them now more happy,
and lighter was the pain their hearts were feeling.
Then said Hilda’s daughter:
“My friend, you should beseech
The stern, ill-minded Gerlind,
that on the pebbly beach
Shoes she will allow us;
she may herself be learning
That if we go there barefoot
we soon shall freeze, and there our death be earning.”
The maidens then went seeking
King Ludwig and his queen.
He, in sleep held fondly,
in Gerlind’s arms was seen;
Both were sunk in slumber,
and the maids, their anger fearing,
Dared not them to waken:
erelong Gu-drun yet greater woe was bearing.
The weeping of the maidens
by the sleeping queen was heard,
Who quick began to chide
them with many a surly word:
“Why, you heedless maidens,
are you not to the seashore going,

There to wash my clothing,
and rinse them with clean water o’er them flowing?”
Then said Gu-drun, in sorrow:
“I know not where to go,
For in the night has fallen
a deep and heavy snow.
That we by death be stricken
unless you now are willing,
Do not send us washing;
to stand without our shoes will us be killing.”
To her the she-wolf answered;
“That I do not fear;
Now to the shore betake you,
or weal or woe to bear.
If you be slow in washing,
my wrath may you be dreading;
E’en if you die, what care I?”
At this the hopeless maids more tears were shedding.
Taking then the clothing,
they went to the water’s brink:
“Of this,” said Gu-drun,
“God willing, I will make you think.”
Then, in the cold, barefooted,
through the snow they waded;
The very high-born maidens,
forsaken in their woe, were worn and faded.
Down to the beach they plodded,
as was their wont before,
Bearing the clothing with them
to the bleak and sandy shore.
They once more were standing,
over the washing stooping;
Ever they were thinking
of their sorry plight, and sadly were they hoping.
Often now, and earnestly,
over the watery waste,
While they toiled and sorrowed,
longing looks they cast;
Still of those now dreaming
sent by the queen to free them,
Who o’er the sea were sailing.
The high-born maidens hoped erelong to see them.

Tale the Twenty-Fifth. HOW HERWIC AND ORTWIN FOUND GUDRUN.

After they long had waited,
now saw these washers lone
Two in a boat fast nearing;
others were there none.
Then said the maiden, Hildeburg,
unto Gu-drun, the lady:
“These two are sailing hither;
perhaps the friends sent here are come already.”
She, full of sorrow, answered:
“Ah, woe is me, poor maid!
Although, in truth I’m happy,
I yet am also sad.
If at the seaside washing
Queen Hilda’s men shall see us,
Standing thus barefooted,
we from the shame of this can never free us.
“A poor, unhappy woman,
I know not what to do:
Hildeburg, my dearest,
your mind now let me know;
To hide me were it better,
or shall I stay to shame me
When they shall find me toiling?
Rather would I that they a drudge should name me.”
Then said the maiden Hildeburg:
“E’en how it stands you see;

A thing that is so weighty
 you should not leave to me,
 Whate'er you think the better,
 your choice will I be sharing;
 With you I'll stay forever,
 both good, and ill together with you bearing."
 Then from the water turning,
 both fled away in haste;
 But now the boat of the sailors
 had neared the land so fast,
 They saw the lovely washers,
 away from the seashore hieing,
 And at once bethought them
 that they for shame away from the clothes were flying.
 They called unto the maidens,
 as they sprang upon the beach:
 "Whither so fast are you fleeing,
 fair washers, we beseech?
 We are far-off wanderers,
 as well our looks are showing;
 Your linen may be stolen,
 if you leave it here, and from us in haste are going."
 They kept their way still swiftly,
 as if they heard it not:
 But yet the boisterous shouting
 had reached their ears, I wot.
 The bold and knightly Herwic
 too roughly bade them hear him,
 For he not yet mistrusted
 'twas his betrothed that now he saw so near him.
 Cried Herwic, lord of Sealand:
 "Maidens fair and young,
 Tell us now, we pray you,
 to whom these clothes belong.
 We ask you in all honor,
 by the faith to maidens owing,
 Most fair and lovely ladies,
 that back to the shore you will again be going."
 Gu-drun, the maid, then answered:
 "It were a shame, forsooth,
 Since to the trust of woman
 you give your pledge in truth,
 Were I of this unworthy,
 nor faith in you were showing:
 To the shore we back will hasten,
 although my eyes with tears are overflowing."
 They, in their smocks, came nearer;
 both with the sea were wet.
 Before that time, the maidens
 were always clean and neat;
 Now the wretched drudges
 with cold and frost were quaking;
 Little of late had they eaten,
 and with the March-like winds were chilled and shaking.
 The time had come already
 for snows to melt away,
 And, with each other vying,
 the little birds, each day,
 Again their songs would warble,
 as soon as March was ended;
 But in the snow, and ice-cold,
 the maids were found forlorn, and unbefriended.
 Stiff were their locks and frosted,
 when they now drew near;
 However well and carefully
 they had smoothed their hair,
 It now was tossed and tumbled
 by the wind so wildly blowing:
 Hard bestead were the maidens,
 toiling there, whether it rained or was snowing.
 The ice was loose and broken,
 floating everywhere

Upon the sea before them.
 The maids were filled with care;
 Pale were now their bodies,
 e'en as the snow around them,
 By their scanty clothes scarce hidden.
 Sad was the lot in which the knights had found them.
 Then the high-born Herwic
 a kind "Good-morning" bade
 To the sad and homeless maidens;
 of this sore need they had,
 For oft their keeper, Gerlind,
 had them with harshness taunted.
 To hear "Good-morning," "Good-evening,"
 was now to the maids but very seldom granted.
 Then said the youthful Ortwin:
 "I beg you say to me
 To whom belongs this clothing,
 that on the sands I see?
 For whom are you here washing?
 You both are so comely showing,
 Who can this shame have done you?
 May God bring low the man such outrage doing!
 "So fair are you and lovely,
 you well might wear the crown;
 If all that is your birthright
 you now could call your own,
 You would, in truth, be worthy
 to be with ladies seated.
 Has he for whom you are toiling
 more such washers fair so foully treated?"
 To him the lovely maiden
 in greatest sorrow spoke:
 "Many he hath beside us
 who fairer still do look.
 All that you list now ask us;
 yet, with eye unsleeping,
 One from the leads doth watch us,
 who ne'er will forgive the talk with you we're keeping."
 "Be not at this uneasy,
 but deign our gold to take,
 And with it these four arm-bands.
 These your reward we make,
 If you, most lovely ladies,
 of speech will not be wary;
 To you we give them gladly,
 if of the truth we seek you be not chary."
 "God leave to you your arm-bands,
 albeit you we thank;
 Nought for hire may you give us,"
 quoth the lady high in rank.
 "Ask what you will, but quickly,
 for we must hence be going;
 If we were seen here with you,
 nothing but sorrow should we then be knowing."
 "We beg you first to tell us
 who this land doth own?
 Whose are the castles also?
 By what name is he known
 Who leaves you without clothing,
 low tasks upon you laying?
 He may of his worth be boastful;
 that he doeth well no man may now be saying."
 To him Gu-drun thus answered:
 "Hartmut is one of the lords
 To whom these lands owe fealty.
 His castles well he guards,
 With Ludwig, king of the Normans,
 who is Hartmut's father:
 And many knightly vassals,
 to keep their lands from foes, they round them gather."
 "Gladly would we see them,"
 said Ortwin, the friendly knight;

“Happy were I, fair lady,
 if we could learn aright
 Where, within their kingdom,
 we might those kings be meeting,
 We bring to them an errand;
 as henchmen of a king, we bear his greeting.”
 Gu-drun, the high-born lady,
 thus to the warrior spake:
 “This very morning early,
 ere yet they were awake,
 I left them in their castle;
 in their beds they slumbered.
 I know not if thence they have ridden:
 their men, I think, full forty hundred numbered.”
 Again King Herwic asked her:
 “To us yet further tell,
 Why is it such brave princes
 in fear like this should dwell,
 That they so many warriors
 always should be needing?
 Had I that band of fighters,
 to gain a kingdom I would them be leading.”
 To him Gu-drun thus answered:
 “Of that we nothing know;
 And where their lands are lying,
 that neither can we show:
 But from the Hegeling kingdom,
 although it is not near them,
 They fear that harm awaits them
 from foes who soon may come, who hatred bear them.”
 Trembling, cold, and shivering,
 the maids before them stood;
 Then the knightly Herwic
 spake, in kindly mood:
 “I would, most lovely ladies,
 if we might be so daring,
 And if no shame it gave you,
 that on the shore our cloaks you would be wearing.”
 Hilda’s daughter answered:
 “May God your kindness bless;
 We cannot take your mantles,
 but we thank you none the less.
 No eye shall ever see me
 manly clothing wearing.”
 If only the maidens knew it,
 much greater ills would they yet be often bearing.
 Oft the eyes of Herwic
 did on the maiden rest;
 To him she seemed most comely,
 and her bearing was the best.
 For all her heavy sorrows
 sighs in his heart were awakened;
 And to one erst thought of kindly,
 from him long taken, he the maiden likened.
 Then spake again young Ortwin,
 who was of Ortland king:
 “Can either of you ladies
 tidings whatever bring
 Of a band of homeless maidens
 who to this land were carried?
 Gu-drun was one among them,
 and gladly would we learn where she has tarried.”
 To him the maiden answered:
 “To me is that well known;
 A maiden throng came hither
 in days now long bygone:
 They to this far-off kingdom
 by fighters bold were taken;
 And full of heavy sorrow
 came these maids forlorn, of hope forsaken.
 “The maid whom you are seeking
 I know,” she said, “full well;

I here have seen her toiling,
 this for a truth I tell.”
 She was herself the maiden
 who was by Hartmut stolen,
 Gu-drun, Queen Hilda’s daughter,
 and all she told had erst herself befallen.
 Then spake the knightly Herwic:
 “Ortwin, list to me:
 If fair Gu-drun, your sister,
 yet alive may be,
 In any land whatever,
 for us on earth still watching,
 This must be that lady;
 ne’er have I seen two maids so nearly matching.”
 To him then said young Ortwin:
 “The maid in truth is fair,
 But to my long-lost sister
 no likeness doth she bear.
 The days are not forgotten
 when we were young together;
 Should I rove the whole world over,
 so fair as she I ne’er could find another.”
 When now Gu-drun, who listened,
 heard the name of the man,
 That his friend did call him Ortwin,
 she looked at him again:
 For she indeed were happy
 if she were thus befriended,
 And found in him a brother,
 for then her cares were o’er and her sorrows ended.
 “However they may call you,
 a worthy knight are you:
 A man in all things like you
 in days of yore I knew;
 The name of Herwic bore he,
 in Sealand was his dwelling.
 If that brave knight were living,
 to loose us from our bonds he were not failing.
 “I am one of the maidens
 whom Hartmut’s warriors stole,
 And bore across the waters,
 in thralldom sorrowful.
 Gu-drun you here are seeking,
 but need not thus have hasted;
 The queenly Hegeling maiden
 at last is dead, with toil and hardship wasted.”
 The eyes of Ortwin glistened,
 filling fast with tears;
 Nor was it without weeping
 that now King Herwic hears
 The tidings to them given,—
 that fair Gu-drun, their lady,
 From them by death was taken;
 at this their heavy hearts to break were ready.
 When both, before her weeping,
 were seen by the homeless maid,
 With eyes upon them fastened,
 thus to them she said:
 “It seems to me most likely,
 by the mood that you are wearing,
 That to Gu-drun, the maiden,
 you worthy knights are love and kinship bearing.”
 To her young Herwic answered:
 “Yes, for the maid, forsooth,
 I shall pine till life be ended;
 to me she gave her troth,
 And to me, in wedlock plighted,
 with faithful oaths was given:
 Since then, by the craft of Ludwig,
 her have I lost, by him from her birthland riven.”
 Then said the sorrowing maiden:
 “Your words would me mislead,

For men have often told me
that Herwic long is dead.
No bliss on earth were greater,
that God to me were granting,
Could I learn that he is living;
a friend to lead me hence were then not wanting.”
Then said the knightly Herwic:
“Upon my hand now look;
Know you this ring I am wearing?
Mine is the name you spoke;
With this were we betrothed:
to Gu-drun I am faithful ever,
And if you were my loved one,
I would lead you hence, and would forsake you never.”
Upon his hand then looking,
a ring there met her sight,
Set with a stone from Abalie,
in gold that glittered bright;
Never her eyes had rested
on one more rich or fairer.
Gu-drun, the queenly maiden,
of this same ring had whilom been the wearer.
The happy maiden, smiling,
with words her bliss did show:
“Of this I once was owner,
and well the ring I know.
Look upon this I am wearing;
'twas the gift of my early lover,
While I, a gladsome maiden,
still dwelt at home, nor stepped its borders over.”
He, on her hand now gazing,
upon the ring did look;
Then unto the maiden
the knightly Herwic spoke:
“That a queenly mother bore thee,
I see by many a token;
After my heavy sorrows,
a blessed sight upon my eyes has broken.”
Then in his arms he folded
the fair and high-born maid:
For all they told each other
they were both glad and sad.
He kissed the maiden fondly,
how oft I cannot reckon;
So, too, he greeted Hildeburg,
showing his love to both the maids forsaken.
Then the youthful Ortwin
begged the maid to say
Whether to do her task-work
there was no other way
Than, standing by the seaside,
all day to wash the clothing?
At this she greatly sorrowed,
and felt for her work the deepest shame and loathing.
“Tell me now, fair sister,
where may your children be
Whom you have borne to Hartmut,
in his land across the sea,
That all alone on the seashore
to wash they thus allow you?
If here a queen they call you,
the name you bear but little good can do you.”
Shedding tears, she answered:
“How should I have a child?
No love could Hartmut kindle,
that I to him should yield;
And well do all men know it
who near him here are dwelling.
Because I would not love him
I now must toil, and woe my heart is swelling.”
Then spake the knightly Herwic:
“We now can truly say

That we good luck have met with,
on our errand far away;
And nought could have befallen
that for us were better.
It behooves us now to hasten
to free the maid from the ills that here beset her.”
Then said the knight, young Ortwin:
“That may never be.
Had I a hundred sisters,
I would sooner let them die
Than here, in another's kingdom,
to hide a deed of plunder;
Stealing those from our foemen
whom they by stormy fight from us did sunder.”
Then spake the lord of Sealand:
“This do I greatly fear,
Should our search be known to any,
or if they find us here,
They then may take the maiden,
and her far hence may carry,
And never shall we see her:
'twere best to hide the deed, nor longer tarry.”
Him did Ortwin answer:
“How can we leave in need
Her faithful band of maidens?
So long a stay they've made
Here in this land of foemen
that well may they be weary:
Gu-drun, my worthy sister,
should ne'er forsake her maids, in bondage dreary.”
To him then spake brave Herwic:
“Is this in truth your mind?
Ne'er shall my well-beloved
be left by me behind;
To take the ladies with us,
e'en as we can, 'tis better.”
Him did Ortwin answer:
“Here to be hacked with the sword for me were fitter.”
Then said the downcast maiden:
“What have I done to thee,
My dearest brother Ortwin?
Never as yet in me
Was seen such ill-behavior
that I for that was chidden.
For what great sin I know not
am I, my lord, to make atonement bidden?”
“I do not thus, dear sister,
for want of love to thee;
Thereby your band of maidens
I shall the better free.
Only as fits my honor,
hence will I ever take you;
Herwic for your lover
you yet shall have, and ne'er will he forsake you.”
Gu-drun was heavy-hearted
as they went on board the boat;
She said: “Woe worth my wanderings!
my sorrow endeth not.
He whom once I trusted,
must hope in him be shaken
That he will break my bondage?
My bliss is yet far off, and my faith mistaken.”
In haste the daring warriors
turned from the shore away.
Gu-drun, the maid, heart-broken,
to Herwic called to stay:
“Of me you once thought highly,
but now you hold me lightly:
To whom, in my woe, do you leave me?
Bereft of kin, to whom can I trust me rightly?”
“I do not hold you lightly;
you are of maids the best.

My coming, queenly lady,
 hide within your breast;
 Again, ere morning lightens,
 these shores will I be treading,—
 For this my troth I pledge you,—
 eighty thousand followers with me leading.”
 As fast as they were able
 they hastened then away;
 Never friends were sundered
 more sadly than that day
 Were these from one another;
 (the truth to you I’m telling.)
 As far as their eyes could follow,
 the maidens watched the boat away fast sailing.
 Gu-drun, the queenly maiden,
 her washing now forgot;
 Betwixt her bliss and sorrow,
 her toil she heeded not.
 The harsh and wicked Gerlind,
 the idle women spying
 Standing by the seashore,
 in anger stormed, that her clothes unwashed were lying.
 Then said the maiden Hildeburg,
 from Ireland, o’er the sea:
 “Why do you let the clothing
 here uncared for be?
 The clothes of Ludwig’s followers
 still unwashed are waiting.
 If this be known to Gerlind,
 yet harder blows from her shall we be getting.”
 Queen Hilda’s daughter answered:
 “Too proud I am, I ween,
 That for the wicked Gerlind
 I e’er should wash again.
 Henceforth a toil so lowly
 in scorn shall I be holding,
 For two young kings have kissed me,
 they in kindness me in their arms enfolding.”
 Then Hildeburg made answer:
 “Scorn not that I should teach
 Or that I now would show you
 how best the clothes to bleach:
 We must not leave them yellow,
 but carefully must whiten;
 Else do I greatly fear me
 our backs with blows and stripes will well be beaten.”
 Then said old Hagen’s grandchild:
 “At last my lot is bright,
 With hope and gladness beaming.
 If they my back shall smite
 With rods, from now till morning,
 I trow it will not kill me;
 But soon shall those who wronged us
 know themselves the ills they chose to deal me.
 “These clothes I should be washing
 down to the tide I’ll bear,
 And fling them into the water,”
 said the maiden fair;
 “Their freedom I will give them,
 even as ’tis fitting
 That I, a queen, should do it;
 hence they may float away, no hindrance meeting.”
 Whate’er was said by Hildeburg,
 Gu-drun the clothes then took,
 That Gerlind her had given;
 her task she would not brook,
 But far into the billows
 she threw them, strongly hurling:
 I know not if ever she found them;
 they soon were lost to sight, in the waters swirling.
 The night was drawing nearer,
 and the light began to wane;

To the castle, heavy-laden,
 went Hildeburg again.
 Seven robes of finest linen
 she bore, with other clothing;
 Gu-drun, young Ortwin’s sister,
 with Hildeburg went also, bearing nothing.
 When they had reached the castle,
 the time was very late.
 Before King Ludwig’s palace,
 standing at the gate,
 They saw the wicked Gerlind,
 watching there to meet them:
 Soon as she saw the washers,
 with words of bitter scorn she ’gan to greet them.
 Thus she spake in anger:
 “What does this gadding mean?
 Stripes upon your bodies
 you both have earned, I ween,
 Thus upon the seashore,
 in the evening light, to wander;
 For me it were unseemly
 into my room to take you, after loitering yonder.”
 She said: “Now tell me quickly,
 think you this is meet?
 You spurn the greatest princes,
 and show them nought but hate,
 But linger yet, at nightfall,
 with low-born varlets flirting.
 Would you be thought of highly,
 know you that this your own good name is hurting.”
 The well-born maiden answered:
 “Why speak of me so ill?
 Never have I, poor maiden,
 had the thought or will
 With any man to tattle,
 however dear I held him,
 Unless it were a kinsman;
 a talk with him I rightfully might yield him.”
 “Say you I chide you wrongly?
 Hush, you idle jade!
 For this, to-night, I tell you,
 a reckoning shall be made.
 To be so bold and shameless
 you then will dare no longer;
 Before with you I’ve ended,
 your back shall feel that I than you am stronger.”
 “In that will I gainsay you,”
 said then the maiden proud;
 “Again with rods to beat me
 you ne’er shall be allowed.
 You and all your kindred
 in birth are far below me;
 You may yet for this be sorry,
 if treatment so unseemly you shall show me.”
 Then spake the wolfish Gerlind:
 “Where is my clothing left,
 That, folded in your apron,
 you thus your hands have wrapt;
 Bearing yourself so idly,
 now from toil thus turning?
 If I live a little longer,
 another kind of work shall you be learning.”
 King Hagen’s grandchild answered:
 “Down by the deep sea-flood
 I left your clothing lying.
 It was too great a load;
 I found the weight too heavy,
 alone to the house to carry.
 If never again you see them,
 but little I care, the while with you I tarry.”
 Then quoth the old she-devil:
 “All this shall help you not;

Before I sleep this evening,
 bitter shall be your lot!"
 Then were tied, at her bidding,
 rods from hedges broken;
 Gerlind would not give over
 the training hard 'gainst which the maid had spoken.
 Then strongly to a bedstead
 she bade them bind the maid,
 And alone in a room to leave her,
 where not a friend she had:
 There should she be beaten,
 till skin from bone was falling.
 When this was known to her women,
 they all began to weep, and loud were wailing.
 Then spake Gu-drun, with cunning:
 "Now list to what I say:
 If I with rods am beaten
 thus shamefully to-day,
 Should e'er an eye behold me
 with kings and princes seated,
 And I a crown be wearing,
 to you a fit reward shall then be meted.
 "Henceforth for me such teaching
 'twere best you let alone;
 Sooner the king I've slighted
 shall have me for his own:
 Then as queen of Normandy
 here will I be dwelling;
 And when I here am mighty,
 what I will do may no one now be telling."
 "Be this your will," said Gerlind,
 "angry no more I'll be:
 E'en if a thousand garments
 you thus had lost for me,
 I would, in truth, forgive it;
 well you will have thriven
 If to my son, young Hartmut,
 the Norman prince, your love at last be given."
 Then said the lovely maiden:
 "I now would take some rest;
 This care and heavy sorrow
 my strength doth sorely waste.
 Send for the young King Hartmut,
 bid him be hither speeding,
 And say, whate'er he wishes,
 that I henceforth will always do his bidding."
 Those who heard them talking,
 straightway to Hartmut ran,
 And to the youthful warrior
 told the tale again.
 Some of his father's liegemen
 there with him were seated,
 When word to him was given
 in haste to seek Gu-drun, who for him waited.
 Then said the one who told him:
 "Give me now my fee;
 Queen Hilda's lovely daughter
 will grant her love to thee.
 She bids you now to hasten
 at once to her in her bower;
 No longer are you hated,
 for better thoughts she harbors than of yore."
 The high-born knight then answered:
 "To lie you have no need.
 If true indeed were your tidings,
 well should you be feed;
 By me would three great castles
 and a hide of land be given,
 With sixty golden arm-bands;
 while bliss thenceforth my days should long enliven."
 Then said to him another:
 "This tale, I know, is true;

The fee should I be sharing.
 At court they wish for you;
 Gu-drun, the maid, has said it.
 To love you she is ready;
 And if in truth you wish it,
 she in your land will be your queen and lady."
 To those who told the tidings
 his thanks young Hartmut gave;
 From off his seat, o'er-gladdened,
 upsprang the warrior brave.
 He thought that, in His kindness,
 God this boon had done him,
 And, with a heart now happy,
 he sought the maiden's bower who love had shown him.
 In garments wet there standing,
 was seen the high-born maid;
 With eyes still dim with weeping,
 greeting to him she said.
 Forward she came to meet him;
 and now so near was standing
 That he, in fondness turning,
 her in his arms would clasp, towards her bending.
 She said: "Not so, King Hartmut,
 this you may not do;
 For men in truth would wonder
 if they should look on you.
 Nought am I but a washer;
 in scorn would they be holding
 You, a king so mighty,
 if in your arms Gu-drun you should be folding."
 "This will I, Sir Hartmut,
 freely to you allow,
 When, by my crown, your kinsmen
 me as a queen shall know.
 No longer shall I scorn you,
 when I that name am bearing;
 For both will this be fitting;
 me in your arms to take you may then be daring."
 Then, with all good-breeding,
 he farther off withdrew,
 And thus Gu-drun he answered:
 "Maiden fair and true,
 Since now you deign to love me,
 richly will I reward you;
 Myself and all my kinsmen,
 whate'er you bid, will kindness show toward you."
 Then said to him the maiden:
 "Such bliss I never knew.
 If, after my weary toiling,
 I aught may ask of you,
 This first of all I wish for,
 that I, poor wretched lady,
 This night, before I slumber,
 may have for me a restful bath made ready.
 "And list to me yet further:
 another boon I crave;
 'Tis that my friendly maidens
 I now with me may have.
 Among Queen Gerlind's women
 you will find them, sad and weary;
 But in their room no longer
 those toiling ones away from me must tarry."
 "Your wish I grant you freely,"
 the young King Hartmut said.
 Then from the room of the women
 the many maids were led;
 With hair unkempt and streaming,
 and scanty clothing wearing,
 They to court betook them:
 for them the wicked Gerlind nought was caring.
 Of these came three and sixty;
 on them did Hartmut look.

Then Gu-drun, the high-born,
 with lofty breeding spoke:
 "Behold, my lord, these maidens!
 Is it your worth befitting
 That they are thus uncared for?"
 He said: "No more shall they the like be meeting."
 Then spake the high-born lady:
 "Hartmut, for love of me,
 I beg that these my maidens,
 whom here in shame you see,
 May have a bath made ready.
 Let now my word be heeded;
 You ought yourself to see them
 decked in the comely clothes they long have needed."
 To her then answered Hartmut,
 of knights a worthy one:
 "Gu-drun, beloved lady,
 if clothes the maids have none
 Erst by them brought hither,
 when they their home were leaving,
 To them yet other clothing,
 the best in all the world, will I be giving.
 "Gladly would I see them,
 with you, more fitly clad."
 Then by those in waiting
 baths were ready made.
 Among the kin of Hartmut
 chamberlains many were there;
 To help Gu-drun they hastened,
 thinking that later she their hopes would further.
 Gu-drun and all her maidens
 were by the bath made glad;
 Then the best of clothing
 that any ever had
 To all the homeless women
 alike was freely given.
 The lowliest one among them
 might gain the love of a king, if she had striven.
 When they their bath had taken,
 wine to them was brought;
 In all the land of Normandy
 none better need be sought;
 And soon the weary maidens
 the best of mead were drinking.
 To Hartmut thanks were given;
 to gain such praises how could he e'er be thinking!
 Soon the lovely maiden
 was seated in the hall.
 Gerlind bade her daughter
 then, with her maidens all,
 To don their clothing quickly,
 the finest and most fitting,
 If they Queen Hilda's daughter
 wished to see, among her maidens sitting.
 At once the well-born Ortrun
 clothed her in her best;
 To seek Gu-drun then straightway
 gladly did she haste.
 The grandchild of wild Hagen
 quickly went to meet her;
 When they saw each other,
 the happiness of both was never greater.
 Each one kissed the other,
 'neath a band of gold on her head;
 The hue of both was brighter
 for the golden light they shed.
 Each in her way was happy;
 Ortrun's eyes were beaming,
 To see the high-born washer
 in finest clothes now clad, so comely seeming.
 The poor Gu-drun was blithesome,
 as we have said before,

That soon her friendly kinsmen
 she would see once more.
 The maidens sat together,
 with playful talk now gladdened;
 Whoever looked upon them
 might gain a happy heart, however saddened.
 "'Tis well for me," said Ortrun,
 "that I have lived till now,
 When as the wife of Hartmut
 you here yourself will show.
 To one who loves my brother
 gladly will I give her
 The crown of my mother, Gerlind,
 that I of right should wear did I outlive her."
 "Ortrun, may God reward you,"
 thus the maiden spake;
 "Whatever you shall bid me,
 that will I do for your sake.
 You have bewept so often
 the sorrows I was bearing,
 From you will I ne'er be sundered,
 and every day shall you my love be sharing."
 Then with maiden wiliness
 spake the fair Gu-drun:
 "Now you ought, Sir Hartmut,
 to send out runners soon,
 Through all the Norman kingdom,
 to give to friends your bidding.
 As many as will hear it,
 to come to your palace now, to see our wedding.
 "When peace is in your borders,
 this to you I say,
 Before your host of warriors
 I will wear the crown one day.
 How many he has who woos me
 thus shall I be knowing;
 Then before your liegemen
 myself and all my kin will I be showing."
 The maid in truth was crafty;
 from the castle on that day
 A hundred men or over
 did Hartmut send away.
 So, when the Hegeling fighters
 should for him be seeking,
 Fewer foes should meet them:
 for this was Gu-drun their going thence bespeaking.
 Then spake the old Queen Gerlind:
 "Now, fair daughter mine,
 You two must leave each other;
 when another morn shall shine,
 Then may you be together,
 with none your bliss forbidding."
 She left Gu-drun, low bowing,
 and begged that God would her in his ways be leading.
 Then did Hartmut leave her.
 All hearkened to her word;
 They gave to the maiden cup-bearers,
 and carvers at the board:
 The high-born lady's wishes
 they bade should well be heeded;
 Nor food nor drink she wanted:
 busy were they to bring her all she needed.
 Then spake one lovely maiden
 among the Hegeling band:
 "When we on this are thinking,
 how from our fatherland
 Our foes have brought us hither,
 to live unblest forever,
 We still are bowed with sorrow;
 when in our homes, such woe we thought of never."
 She then began a-weeping,
 where sat her lady fair.

When this was seen by others
 who stood beside her there,
 They felt yet greater sorrow
 their heavy hearts now filling.
 All then wept together;
 but they saw their mistress, fair Gu-drun, was smiling.
 They thought that now forever
 they far from home must stay:
 But their lady ne'er was thinking
 to bide so long away;
 They would, ere four days later,
 their freedom all be knowing.
 The time had come already
 to whisper to Gerlind that they would soon be going.
 Beyond her wont a little
 to laugh had the maid begun;
 For fourteen years now bygone
 she never bliss had known.
 Of her glee the bad she-devil
 quickly now was hearing;
 She gave the hint to Ludwig,
 for care she felt, and anger past all bearing.
 She went at once to Hartmut,
 and said: "Oh, son of mine,
 List to the truth I tell you!
 throughout this land of thine,
 All within it dwelling
 shall see both strife and toiling.
 Why it is I know not,
 the fair young queen, Gu-drun, is now so smiling.
 "I know not how it happened,
 or how the news she heard,
 But men sent out by her kinsmen
 hither to come have dared.
 Therefore, knightly Hartmut,
 some way must you be choosing,
 Lest, thro' the friends she looks for,
 your worthy name and life you may be losing."
 He said: "Be not so fearful.
 I grudge it not to the maid
 That she, with all her women,
 should for a time be glad.
 All her nearest kinsmen
 far from me are dwelling;
 What harm can they be doing?
 I need not guard 'gainst ills they may be dealing."
 Gu-drun, now over-wearied,
 some of her maidens sent
 To see if her bed were ready,
 for she on sleep was bent;
 For a night at least her sorrow
 she could now be leaving.
 Then went with them most kindly
 King Hartmut's chamberlain, his service giving.
 Youths of the Norman palace
 before her bore the light;
 On her they ne'er had waited
 until that very night.
 Thirty beds or over
 now were found made ready;
 Nice were they and cleanly,
 meet for Gu-drun and many a well-born lady.
 On them were pillows lying
 from far Arabia brought,
 With green, like leaves of clover,
 and other hues, inwrought.
 Bedspreads on them hanging
 were sewed in strips most fairly;
 And red as fire was shining
 the gold mixed in with silken threads not sparely.
 Beneath the silken bedspreads
 fishes' skins were laid,

To make them thicker and warmer.
 The fair and lovely maid,
 Thither come from the Hegelings,
 Hartmut would be wooing,
 For he as yet knew nothing
 of the harm to him that her friends would soon be doing.
 Then said the high-born maiden:
 "To sleep you now may go,
 All you that wait on Hartmut;
 we, too, the same will do.
 I, and my ladies with me,
 one night at least will rest us;
 For, since our coming hither,
 freedom from hardest toil hath never blest us."
 All who there were gathered
 of Hartmut's knights and men,
 The wise as well as youthful,
 thence to go were seen;
 They to rest then hasted,
 the ladies' bower now leaving.
 Wine and mead unstinted
 to the homeless maids were others freely giving.
 Then said Hilda's daughter:
 "Now shut for me the door."
 They barred the ladies' bedroom
 with heavy bolts full four:
 The room was shut so tightly
 that what therein was doing,
 However much one listened,
 outside he nought could hear, nor might be knowing.
 Awhile they all were seated,
 merrily drinking wine;
 Then said Gu-drun, the queenly:
 "Dearest maidens mine,
 You well may now be happy,
 after your heavy sorrow:
 Your friends I soon will show you;
 on gladsome sights your eyes shall feed to-morrow.
 "Herwic, my betrothed,
 did I this morning kiss,
 And Ortwin, too, my brother;
 you now may think on this.
 She shall soon be richer,
 and care from her be taken,
 Who shall well be mindful,
 when night is over, me in the morn to waken.
 "You well shall be rewarded.
 To us glad days are nigh:
 And freely will I give you
 castles strong and high,
 And with them many acres;
 for these shall I be gaining,
 If I the day shall witness
 when, as a queen, I o'er my lands am reigning."
 They now lay down to slumber,
 with hearts all free from care.
 They knew to them were speeding
 knights full brave to dare,
 Who erelong would help them,
 and their woes would lighten.
 To see them they were hoping,
 soon as to-morrow's sun the day should brighten.

Tale the Twenty-Sixth. HOW THE HEGELINGS LANDED NEAR LUDWIG'S CASTLE.

We ask you now to listen
 to a tale as yet untold:
 Ortwin still and Herwic
 their way did onward hold
 Until they found their followers
 on the seashore standing.

Then ran these Hegeling liegemen
to meet them on the sands where they were landing.
Them they gladly welcomed,
and bade that they make known
The news that they were bringing,
and freely all to own.
First they asked of Ortwin,
if he could them be telling,
If still Gu-drun were living,
and if in Ludwig's land she now was dwelling?
The knightly Ortwin answered:
"Of this I may not speak
To each and all that ask it;
the truth I will not break
Till all are met together;
then shall you be hearing
All that our eyes there greeted,
when we to come near Hartmut's walls were daring."
The word was told to others,
and soon a mighty band
Of warriors brave and knightly
around the two did stand.
Then to them said Ortwin:
"Sad is the news I give you,
And, were my wishes granted,
gladly I'd spare the tale, for much 'twill grieve you.
"List to what has happened,
for wonders now begin;
Gu-drun, my long-lost sister,
I, in truth, have seen,
And with her also Hildeburg,
erst in Ireland living."
When he the tidings gave them,
they thought the tale he told not worth believing.
All then said together:
"It is not well to jest;
For her we long have waited,
and now our time you waste.
We hoped from Ludwig's kingdom
you would bring her sooner;
To Ortwin and his followers
belong the shame and blame for wrongs still done her."
"Ask you, then, King Herwic:
he, too, has seen the maid;
And he can also tell you
what wrongs on us are laid.
Could you, my friends, bethink you
of any shame that's greater?
We found Gu-drun and Hildeburg
upon the seashore standing, washing in the water."
Soon were his kindred weeping,
all who there were seen.
At this the aged Wâ-te
right scornful was, I ween:
"Truly for women only
is such behavior fitting;
Why you weep you know not.
This, in a knight, one never should be meeting.
"But if you are in earnest,
to help Gu-drun in her need,
The clothes that she has whitened
must you in war make red.
Erst white hands did wash them
for men who must be bleeding;
So you now may help her,
and soon the maid forlorn be homeward leading."
Then said the Danish Fru-te:
"How can this be done?
How can we reach their kingdom
before our plan is known,
Before the men of Ludwig,
and Hartmut's knights, are learning

That Hilda's friends are gathered,
and toward the Norman land at length are turning?"
Then said the aged Wâ-te:
"Hear what 'tis best to do;
I trust before his castle
fitly to meet the foe,
If I may live to see him
there before me standing.
Brave knights, your rest now leaving,
soon on the Norman shore must you be landing.
"The air is fresh and gladsome,
the sky is broad and bright,
And, well for us it happens,
the moon will shine to-night.
From the sandy shore now hasten,
my warriors bold and daring:
Before it dawns to-morrow,
we King Ludwig's stronghold must be nearing."
Then they all were busy,
when thus old Wâ-te spoke;
Soon their clothes and horses
on board the ships they took.
All the night still sailing,
towards the land they hasted;
And ere the morrow's daylight,
before the castle, on the sands they rested.
Hushed were all by Wâ-te,
throughout the warlike band,
As soon as they to rest them
lay down upon the sand.
To his water-weary followers
leave for this was granted;
Their shields about them spreading,
on them they laid their heads, for sleep they wanted.
"Whoe'er to-morrow morning
hopes to gain the fight
Must not," said the aged Wâ-te,
"oversleep to-night.
For the struggle now before us
we hardly can be waiting;
As soon as morning lightens,
then, good knights, the foe must we be meeting."
"Further I give you warning:
whoe'er my horn shall hear
Along the seashore sounded,
soon as it meets his ear,
Let him at once make ready
the foeman to be meeting.
When I shall blow at daybreak,
no longer then may any there be waiting.
"When I again shall blow it,
let each to this give heed;
Quickly let his saddle
be laid upon his steed.
Let him then be waiting,
till I see 'tis daylight fully,
And the time has come for the onset;
let none hang back, but meet the struggle truly."
To do as Wâ-te bade them
their word they gladly gave.
How many a lovely woman
did he of bliss bereave!
For soon their dearest kindred
unto death were wounded,
Who now were only waiting
until the horn in the early morning sounded.
"When you, my friends and kinsmen,
thrice my horn shall hear,
Then, seated on your horses,
must you your weapons wear;
Thus must you, brave warriors,
wait, your steeds bestriding,

Till me you see, well-weaponed,
under the fair Queen Hilda's banner riding."
Now on the seashore weary
lay they, one and all;
Very near were they resting
to old King Ludwig's hall.
Altho' the night had fallen,
its towers they saw while waking;
The brave and fearless warriors
in stillness lay, no sound or outcry making.
The early star of morning
now had risen high;
Then came a lovely maiden
unto the window nigh.
She there was gazing skyward,
to see when day was breaking,
That she might bring the tidings,
and rich reward from fair Gu-drun be seeking.
Ere she long had waited,
there dawned on the maiden's sight,
With its wonted gleam on the waters,
the early morning light;
Then the sheen of helmets
and many shields there flittered:
Foes had besieged the castle,
and all the sands below with weapons glittered.
Back then went the maiden
to where Gu-drun she found:
'Arouse, my queenly lady,
wake from your slumber sound!
The land is held by foemen,
who will these walls be storming;
We have not been forgotten
by those at home; our friends come hither swarming."
Gu-drun, the high-born lady,
quickly sprang from her bed,
And, hasting to the window,
to the maid her thanks she said.
"For this good news you give me,
wealth shall you be earning."
After her heavy sorrow,
now for her friends Gu-drun was sorely yearning.
Rich sails were seen to flutter
near by upon the sea;
Then said the high-born maiden:
"Ah, wellaway! Woe's me!
Would that I ne'er were living!"
the wretched one was sighing:
"Many a doughty warrior
this day for me shall here in death be lying."
While thus she was bewailing,
nearly all still slept;
But soon was one heard shouting,
who guard for Ludwig kept:
"Be up, you careless warriors!
your arms, your arms be taking!
And you, my king of Normandy!
I fear that all too late you will be waking."
This the wicked Gerlind
heard, as the warder cried;
Then, while fast he slumbered,
she left the old king's side.
Up to the roof of the castle
then at once she hastened;
She thence saw many foemen,
and on her devilish heart great sorrow fastened.
Back again she speeded
to where she found the king:
"Awake, my lord, make ready
for guests who followers bring!
Now hem they in your castle,
and well may they be dreaded:

That smile of young Gu-drun
will cost your knights a strife as yet unheeded."
"Hush!" then answered Ludwig,
"I will go myself to see;
We must all be bravely waiting
for whatsoe'er may be."
Then looked he from his castle,
to see the foemen thronging;
His eyes by guests were greeted,
on whom to look he never might be longing.
Before his palace waving,
he saw their banners spread;
Then said the old King Ludwig:
"Let some one go with speed
And bear this news to Hartmut.
I for pilgrims take them,
To sell their wares come hither;
before my hall a market would they make them."
Then they wakened Hartmut,
that he the tale might hear.
Outspoke that daring warrior:
"Let none be sad or fear.
I see full twenty princes
their blazoned banners bearing;
I ween these foes are coming
to wreak the hate they long 'gainst us are wearing."

Tale the Twenty-Seventh. HOW LUDWIG AND HARTMUT MET THE HEGELINGS.

Asleep still left he lying
all his faithful men.
He and his father Ludwig,
the twain, to go were seen,
And, gazing from the window,
they saw the throngs below them.
Quickly then said Hartmut:
"Too near our castle-walls methinks they show them.
"I ween they are not pilgrims,
in truth, my father dear;
More like it is that Wä-te
and all his men draw near.
He from Sturm-land cometh,
the lord of Ortland bringing;
The men I see are like them,
as I know from the flag that they to the breeze are flinging.
"I see a brown silk pennon,
that comes from Karadé;
Before that flag is lowered,
many will rue the day.
On it a head is blazoned,—
as red as gold it glitters:
Guests so bold and warlike
we well can spare; their sight the day embitters.
"The Moorland king is bringing
full twenty thousand men,
Knights as strong and daring
as any I have seen;
To win from us great honor
methinks they now are craving.
There comes another banner,
that o'er yet other knights its folds is waving.
"It is the flag of Horant,
the knight from the Danish land;
I see with him Lord Fru-te,
I know both him and his band.
And hither, too, from Wales,
many foemen leading,
Morunc now comes riding;
he, for the morning's fight, o'er the sands is speeding.
"I see another banner,
on it a chevron red,

With sharpened spears within it;
 for this shall many bleed.
 Ortwin it is who bears it,
 from Ortland hither faring;
 Erewhile we slew his father;
 no kindly thought to us he now is bearing.
 "There floats another banner,
 whiter than any swan;
 Blazons bright and golden
 you well may see thereon.
 It is our mother Hilda
 who sends it o'er the water;
 The hatred of the Hegelings
 will soon be known by me who stole her daughter.
 "There I see uplifted
 a flag outspreading wide;
 Of sky-blue silk 'tis woven.
 The truth I will not hide;
 Herwic bears this banner,
 he in the Sealands dwelling.
 Sea-leaves are shown upon it;
 he soon on us his wrath will here be telling.
 "There Irold, too, is coming,—
 this that I say is true,—
 From Friesland leading many,
 as well indeed I know,
 With fighting men from Holstein,
 warriors brave and daring.
 A stormy fight is nearing;
 now in our castle all must arms be wearing."
 Then cried Hartmut loudly:
 "Up, my faithful men!
 If to these guests so warlike,
 who 'neath our walls are seen,
 It may not now be granted
 to ride so boldly near us,
 Then, before the gateway,
 with sword-blows we must greet them, and bravely bear us."
 Then from their beds upsprang they
 all who yet did lie;
 At once, to bring their war-gear,
 loudly did they cry.
 The call to guard their master
 gladly they were hearing;
 Forty hundred warriors
 showed themselves, their shining armor wearing.
 Ludwig and Hartmut with him
 armed themselves for fight:
 To the sad and homeless maidens
 this was a sorry sight;
 These within the castle
 uneasy hearts were keeping;
 They said to one another:
 "Let him who smiled before this day be weeping!"
 Quickly came Queen Gerlind,
 old King Ludwig's wife;
 She said: "What will you, Hartmut?
 Would you lose your life,
 With that of all your kinsmen
 who here our lot are sharing?
 The foe will surely slay you,
 if to leave the castle-walls you now be daring."
 The well-born knight then answered:
 "Mother, stay within;
 You may not give your teaching
 to me or to my men.
 Spare your words for women;
 they mayhap will listen,
 While they sit at sewing,
 making their silks with gold and gems to glisten.
 "Now, mother, let us see you
 send Gu-drun to wash,

As you did before, with her maidens,
 where the billows dash.
 You weened they all were friendless,
 and had no kindred living;
 You yet may see, ere nightfall,
 what thanks to us our guests will yet be giving."
 Then spake his devilish mother:
 "I did it for your sake,
 Thinking her will to bridle.
 My bidding kindly take;
 Strongly built is the castle,
 let now the gates be fastened;
 They then will gain but little
 who on their toilsome way have hither hastened.
 "Full well you know it, Hartmut,
 you bear the maiden's hate,
 For you have slain her kinsmen:
 your watch you must not bate.
 It is not friends or kinsfolk
 who at our gates are knocking;
 The proud and warlike Hegelings,
 twenty to one of us, come hither flocking.
 "Of this bethink you further,
 my well-belovéd son:
 Bread we have in the castle
 and wine for every one;
 Food will not be lacking
 if here for a year we are staying;
 But if on the field you are taken,
 our foes will you from bondage ne'er be freeing."
 Then to him spake further
 old King Ludwig's wife:
 "Ever guard your honor,
 but do not lose your life.
 Bid men to shoot with longbows
 at the loop-holes standing;
 So shall wounds be given,
 for which their friends at home will tears be spending.
 "Let slings with ropes be fitted;
 we then will meet the foe
 By hurling rocks upon them:
 knights we have enow.
 Before with these new-comers
 you your swords are crossing,
 Stones will I and my maidens
 bring in aprons white, on them to be tossing."
 Angrily spake Hartmut:
 "Lady, get you gone!
 Why do you seek to lead me?
 Is not my mind my own?
 Before my foes shall find me
 within my castle hiding,
 Outside I would die far sooner,
 in fight with Hilda's men, against me riding."
 Then to him said, weeping,
 old King Ludwig's wife:
 "I gave to you this warning
 that you might spare your life,
 And guard yourself the better.
 Whoe'er is seen this morning
 Beneath your banner fighting,
 rich gifts from us shall he be fairly earning.
 "Now arm ourselves," cried Gerlind,
 "stand by my son in fight;
 Strike from your foemen's helmets
 a glowing, fiery light.
 Be always near your master,
 to help him ever striving;
 Fitly these guests to welcome,
 deep be the wounds that you to them are giving."
 Then to his men said Hartmut:
 "My mother's words are true;

If you to me are faithful,
 and strive your best to do,
 And this day, in the struggle,
 to give your help are ready,
 When fathers shall have fallen,
 a friend I'll be to sons bereft and needy."
 A thousand and a hundred
 within King Ludwig's halls
 Now were all well-weaponed.
 Before from out the walls
 Went any thro' the gateways,
 they left the stronghold guarded;
 Still within it posted,
 five hundred warriors brave the castle warded.
 On four gates of the castle
 the bolts were backward thrown:
 Ne'er had they been opened
 to a single spur alone.
 Then with the youthful Hartmut,
 outgoing at his bidding,
 All with helmets fastened,
 went thirty hundred followers boldly riding.
 The hour of strife drew nearer.
 He of the Sturmisch land,
 Wā-te, his horn was blowing;
 and loud across the sand,
 For thirty miles or over,
 men the blast were hearing;
 The fighters of the Hegelings,
 to flock to Hilda's flag, their arms were wearing.
 Once again he blew it:
 at this should all take heed,
 That every knight among them
 then should mount his steed,
 And each his men should gather
 to ride as they were bidden.
 A knight so old as Wā-te,
 and yet so brave, to the fight had never ridden.
 The third time that he blew it,
 he such a blast did make
 That all the land was shaken,
 and the sea a sound gave back;
 Almost from Ludwig's castle
 the corner-stones were falling:
 To raise Queen Hilda's banner
 Wā-te to Horant then was loudly calling.
 They feared old Wā-te sorely,
 none dared to speak aloud;
 A horse was e'en heard neighing.
 Upon the roof now stood
 Herwic's well-belovéd,
 and saw the warriors daring,
 Onward proudly riding,
 to wage the fight with Hartmut, nothing fearing.
 Hartmut rode to meet them;
 he and all his men,
 Bearing well their weapons,
 to leave the gates were seen.
 Those from the windows gazing
 saw the helmets glisten
 Of friends as well as foemen.
 Hartmut not alone to the fight did hasten.
 To all four sides of the castle
 the foes their banners bore;
 Bright in hue like silver
 was the armor that they wore;
 The bosses of their bucklers
 were seen to glitter brightly.
 Much was Wā-te dreaded;
 no lion grim and wild were feared more rightly.
 The fighters from the Moorland
 were seen apart to ride,

And heavy shafts were hurling;
 splinters were scattered wide.
 When with the Norman foemen
 soon the fight did thicken,
 Sharply from their weapons
 and from their breastplates fiery sparks were stricken.
 The warriors from Denmark
 near to the castle rode.
 There the mighty Irold
 six thousand fighters good
 Up to the walls was leading,
 an onslaught to be making:
 Brave and daring were they;
 sore ill from them ere long was Ludwig taking.
 Elsewhere, riding boldly,
 Ortwin his followers led,
 No less than eighty hundred;
 sorrow and woe they made
 For many of the Normans,
 and all the land they harried.
 Gerlind and Ortrun weeping,
 watching the fight from the roof, together tarried.
 Then came Herwic also,
 betrothed to fair Gu-drun;
 Through him full many a woman
 must come to sorrow soon,
 When, for his heart's belovéd,
 he to the fight was springing.
 Beneath the heavy weapons
 were heard the clattering helmets loudly ringing.
 Now came the aged Wā-te,
 with warriors not a few;
 Grim was he and fearless,
 as soon they all well knew.
 His spear not yet he lowered
 as he to the walls came riding:
 Sad was the sight to Gerlind,
 but other were the thoughts Gu-drun was hiding.
 Then came the Norman Hartmut,
 riding before his men.
 E'en had he been Kaiser,
 never would he be seen
 To bear himself more proudly.
 In the sun was seen to glisten
 All his shining armor.
 His boldness on the field not yet did lessen.
 When he was seen by Ortwin,
 the lord of Ortland's throne,
 He said: "Will any tell us,
 to whom this knight is known,
 Who is the daring fighter
 now against us turning?
 He shows as bold a bearing
 as if to win a kingdom he were yearning."
 Then said one among them:
 "'Tis Hartmut whom you see;
 There indeed is a warrior!
 a daring knight is he.
 The selfsame foeman is he
 who erstwhile slew your father.
 Where'er the strife is raging,
 a bolder man than he there's not another."
 Angrily spake Ortwin:
 "Me for his wrongs he owes,
 And must atone full dearly
 before from here he goes.
 The ills that he has done us
 must he be soon undoing;
 Gerlind cannot help him
 that he from hence may e'er alive be going."
 Down upon young Ortwin
 Hartmut riding bore.

Altho' he did not know him,
 deep he plunged his spur;
 His horse sprang forward widely,
 against brave Ortwin driven.
 Both their spears were lowered;
 fire on their armor flashed from spear-strokes given.
 No thrust against the other
 did either leave undone:
 The war-horse then of Ortwin
 was on his haunches thrown;
 Soon, too, the steed did stagger
 whereon was Hartmut seated;
 They could not bear the onset
 of kings who rushed together, to madness heated.
 High upreared the horses;
 a mighty clang arose
 From clash of kingly sword-blades.
 Thanks were due to those
 Who the fight thus opened,
 as knights beseemeth ever.
 Brave were both and fearless;
 to shrink from one another thought they never.
 On both sides came their followers,
 lowering their spears,
 And bringing death to many;
 each his foeman nears,
 And in the shock of the onset
 heavy wounds was giving.
 All of them were faithful,
 and well for a worthy name they now were striving.
 A thousand 'gainst a thousand,
 now the strife began
 Of Hartmut's men with Wâ-te's,
 each man against his man.
 Soon by the lord of Sturmland
 were they so badly treated
 That whoso now came near him
 never a second time with him was mated.
 Now were thickly mingled
 of foes ten thousand men,
 Among King Herwic's warriors;
 they came in anger keen.
 Their mood it was so stubborn
 that rather than be flying
 Far from the field of fighting,
 they on the ground would first in death be lying.
 A knight indeed was Herwic;
 what daring deeds he did!
 Earnest was he in fighting,
 that so the lovely maid
 Might be to him the kinder.
 But how could he be dreaming
 The boon could e'er befall him,
 that the eyes of fair Gu-drun on him were beaming?
 Ludwig, king of the Normans,
 and they of the Danish land,
 Now had met together.
 Ludwig bore in hand
 His strong and heavy weapon;
 lordly was his bearing,
 Yet he with all his followers
 to come too far without the walls was daring.
 There, with his men from Holstein,
 Fru-te, brave and bold,
 Slew full many a foeman;
 of this could much be told.
 Now, too, from the land of Wales,
 Morunc, many slaying,
 Before King Ludwig's castle
 made rich the earth with the dead he low was laying.
 Irold, the youthful champion,
 a knight both true and good,

Slashed thro' foemen's armor,
 shedding their hot life-blood.
 Under Hilda's banner
 was Wâ-te's kinsman fighting;
 Many in death grew paler
 as Horant thinned the crowd he fast was smiting.
 Now the young King Hartmut
 and Ortwin met again.
 Thicker than snow-flakes
 blown by the wind are seen,
 The sword-strokes of the warriors
 upon each other lighted:
 Thus it was that Hartmut
 once more by Ortwin on the field was greeted.
 Gu-drun's young brother, Ortwin,
 was bold and brave enow,
 But Hartmut through his helmet
 smote him a heavy blow;
 Over his shining breastplate
 soon the blood was streaming:
 The followers of Ortwin
 sadly saw the flow, its brightness dimming.
 Great was the crush and uproar;
 hand to hand they fought;
 Many wounds were gaping
 thro' rings of steel well-wrought;
 Many a head had fallen
 beneath the sword-strokes given:
 Death was like a robber,
 that from their kin the dearest friends had riven.
 Now saw the Danish Horant
 that Ortwin from his foe
 A bloody wound had taken;
 then Horant bade them show
 Who 'twas that thus had wounded
 his master loved so dearly.
 Hartmut at this was laughing,
 for both upon the field had met too nearly.
 Ortwin himself then answered:
 "Tis Hartmut this has done."
 Then Hilda's banner was given
 by Horant to one of his own;
 Thinking thus the foeman
 he could harm the better,
 And gain himself much honor:
 now he sought his foe with boldness greater.
 Hartmut heard around him
 a loud and stormy din.
 On many of his warriors
 streams of blood were seen
 Fast from wounds out-welling;
 down to their feet 'twas flowing.
 Then cried Hartmut boldly:
 "For this shall you atone, and this be ruing."
 Now he turned him quickly
 where Horant met his sight;
 Then might one be seeing,
 so brave were both in fight,
 How from their ringed armor
 sparks of fire were flying;
 Blunted were the sword-blades
 which they on each other's helmets fast were plying.
 Hartmut wounded Horant,
 even as he had done
 Not long before to Ortwin;
 a ruddy stream full soon
 Ran from out his armor,
 at Hartmut's hand forth welling.
 Strong indeed was his foeman;
 who now to win his lands could hope be feeling?
 Then in bitter struggle
 many, on either side,

Saw their bucklers shattered,
 tho' strong and often tried;
 Beaten were they and broken
 by sword-strokes quickly given
 By each upon the other.
 Well to guard himself had Hartmut striven.
 Now the friends of Ortwin,
 and those of Horant, too,
 Away from the field did lead them;
 and care did they bestow
 To bind their wounds wide-gaping;
 no time for this they wasted.
 Then again to the war-field
 the knights both rode; once more to the strife they hasted.
 We now must leave them fighting
 as bravely as they will.
 Who the day was winning,
 or whom his foe did kill,
 Before King Ludwig's castle,
 none could yet be saying.
 Grimly strove the Normans;
 their foes, not less, for fame were strength outlaying.
 Of all that there befell them
 none may ever tell;
 But 'tis not yet forgotten
 that many a knight there fell.
 On every side were sword-blades
 heard together ringing;
 Foemen all were mingled,
 the slow with those who quick in fight were springing.
 Wā-te stood not idle,
 that can I well believe.
 He bade farewell to many,
 nor longer let them live;
 Cut down by him in the struggle,
 were they before him lying.
 Fain were Hartmut's kinsmen
 to wreak their wrath for friends who there were dying.
 Now came Herwic nearer,
 so the tale is told,
 And led against King Ludwig
 many a champion bold.
 He saw that aged warrior
 his weapons bravely bearing,
 Where he with all his liegemen,
 a wondrous host of foes beat down, unsparing.
 Herwic called out loudly:
 "Can any one now tell
 Who is that fighting graybeard,
 who all his foes doth fell?
 Deepest wounds for many
 there his hand is hewing,
 With bravery so fearless:
 women in tears will this erelong be ruing."
 When this was heard by Ludwig,
 outspoke that Norman foe:
 "Who in the midst of battle
 seeks my name to know?
 I bear the name of Ludwig:
 for Normandy I'm fighting;
 Could I but meet my foemen,
 them indeed would I be sorely smiting."
 Then spake to him King Herwic:
 "This thou well dost earn:
 Seeing thou art Ludwig,
 with hate for thee I burn.
 For us, upon the sand-drifts,
 many knights thou wast slaying:
 Thou slewest Hettel also;
 a warrior brave was he, beyond all saying.
 "Still further thou hast wronged us,
 before thy day was done:

For this we still are mourning.
 I for my loss have known
 Heart-heaviness and sorrow:
 thou hast my lady stolen
 From me upon the Wulpensand;
 and many knights for her in death have fallen.
 "I bear the name of Herwic:
 thou hast taken my hoped-for wife,
 And again to me must give her;
 else to give his life,
 With that of many a liegeman,
 must one of us be willing."
 Then King Ludwig answered:
 "Too boldly thou in my land in threats art dealing.
 "Thy name, and this thy warning,
 thou hast no need to tell;
 There yet are many others
 from whom I took, as well,
 Their goods and eke their kinsmen.
 To trust my word be ready,
 In this I will not falter;
 thou nevermore may'st hope to kiss thy lady."
 When they thus had spoken,
 the kings no more did rest,
 But sprang upon each other.
 If either got the best,
 To hold it was not easy;
 youths were forward pushing
 Under both the standards,
 and daring knights to help their lords were rushing.
 A fearless king was Herwic,
 and long and bravely fought;
 But quickly Hartmut's father
 the youthful Herwic smote,
 Till he began to stagger
 'neath blows by Ludwig given,
 Who gladly would have slain him,
 or would from out his lands his foe have driven.
 If Herwic's faithful followers
 so near him had not been,
 And given help so quickly,
 never could he, I ween,
 Have freed himself from Ludwig,
 or left the field yet living;
 So well that aged warrior
 to make young Herwic dread him now was striving.
 But help to him was granted,
 his life he did not lose;
 And, neither stunned nor wounded,
 he from his fall arose.
 Then to the roof quick turning,
 his eyes he now was raising,
 To see if, 'mongst the ladies,
 his heart's beloved had on his fall been gazing.

Tale the Twenty-Eighth. HOW HERWIC SLEW LUDWIG.

Now said Herwic sadly:
 "Ah, welaway! Woe's me!
 If fair Gu-drun, my lady,
 my fall did lately see.
 Should e'er the hour be coming
 when I shall clasp the maiden,
 And as a wife shall own her,
 with blame and scorn shall I by her be laden.
 "Sorely doth it shame me,
 that now the gray old man
 Thus has overthrown me."
 Forthwith he bade again
 His men to raise his banner,
 and 'gainst King Ludwig bear it;

Then rushed they on the foemen,
 who might not flee the fight, but all must share it.
 Ludwig heard behind him
 an uproar loud and din;
 Then he turned him quickly,
 and Herwic sought again.
 Soon he heard on helmets
 many sword-blows stricken.
 Those who stood near Ludwig
 well might dread the wrath that both did quicken.
 They sprang upon each other,
 and fast and well they smote;
 Blows on blows loud sounded
 the stormy field throughout.
 Who can tell how many
 now in death were lying?
 The day was lost to Ludwig,
 who there his strength with Herwic would be trying.
 Soon Gu-drun's betrothed
 reached over Ludwig's shield,
 And smote him 'neath his helmet;
 well his sword did he wield.
 Him he sorely wounded,
 and strength no more did leave him;
 Grim death he there awaited
 until King Herwic should of life bereave him.
 Then Herwic with his broadsword
 smote the king anew;
 At once the head of Ludwig
 from off his shoulders flew.
 Well repaid was Herwic
 for his shameful overthrowing;
 The king lay dead before him.
 For this fair eyes must soon be overflowing.
 Ludwig's faithful followers,
 after their king was slain,
 His banner to the castle
 thought to bear again;
 But all too far from the gateway
 they had now been straying;
 From them the flag was taken,
 and death must them erelong with their lord be laying.
 The watchman saw from the castle
 how Ludwig lost his life;
 Then was heard the mourning
 of knights and many a wife:
 Their king, so old and mighty,
 they knew in death was lying;
 Gu-drun and all her maidens
 stood in the hall in fear, and loud were crying.
 As yet the Norman Hartmut,
 knew nothing of the tale,
 How that the king, his father,
 and kinsmen young as well,
 With many bravest warriors,
 now in death were sleeping,
 Then he heard from the castle
 the shrieks and wails of those who there were weeping.
 Now the knightly Hartmut
 unto his followers said:
 "'Tis best we hence withdraw us;
 how many here lie dead
 Who in stormy fighting
 thought our men to be slaying!
 Now will we seek the castle,
 and there until a better time be staying."
 To him they listened gladly,
 and followed where he rode.
 Great was the work of slaughter
 the field around them showed,
 Where with grimmost foemen
 they were closely warring;

Freely had blood been flowing
 beneath the hand of Hartmut and his followers daring.
 "So well," he said, "have you helped me,
 who my kinsmen are,
 That all my lands and riches
 gladly with you I'll share.
 We now will ride to my castle,
 and there to rest betake us;
 Men the gates will open,
 and wine for us will pour, and mead will make us."
 Fallen knights full many
 they left on the field behind:
 Were these of the land the owners,
 still with no braver mind
 They then had met the onset.
 Those for the gates now striving,
 By Wâ-te and his thousand
 were not allowed to reach the castle living.
 He with a host of fighters
 near the gates was seen,
 When Hartmut with his followers
 sought to come within;
 They in this were baffled,
 and their strength were wasting.
 Those who the castle guarded
 heavy stones from off the wall were casting.
 They hurled them down so wildly
 on Wâ-te and his men,
 Like hailstones they were falling,
 with not a stop between.
 Wâ-te recked but little
 how many were dead or living,
 Might he the day be gaining;
 to this alone his thoughts he now was giving.
 Hartmut saw old Wâ-te
 before the castle-gate.
 He said: "Tho' from our foemen
 our gains this day are great,
 Before it shall be ended,
 for this their hate they'll show us:
 Let now the strong be heedful;
 dead must many lie on the field below us.
 "Fear and care it gives me
 that many here are seen
 Whom we must now be meeting.
 Wâ-te with all his men
 I see before the gateway,
 there with sword-strokes hewing.
 If he of the gate be keeper,
 I look for little kindness he'll be doing.
 "See for yourselves, my warriors,
 the gateways and the walls
 By foes on all sides girded;
 knight to knight there calls.
 The roadways all are crowded,
 whichever way we're turning:
 Gu-drun's good friends and champions
 will spare no toil; to win the day they're burning.
 "That you may know too truly,
 as I see already well;
 Friends we must lose full many.
 Howe'er it so befell,
 Before the outer gateway
 already see I waving
 The Moorland foeman's banner;
 lest they get in, a care must you be having.
 "Near to the second gateway
 I see yet other foes:
 I saw Lord Ortwin's banner,
 as on the breeze it rose.
 Gu-drun's young brother is he;
 fair women's smiles he's seeking;

Ere he shall cool his anger,
 beneath his blows will helmets yet be breaking.
 "Now see I, too, brave Herwic,
 before the third gate there;
 With him seven thousand followers
 upon the field are near.
 He comes in guise most knightly,
 to win his own heart's lady;
 On him are gazing gladly
 the fair Gu-drun, and many maids already.
 "To hasten back to my castle,
 the thought too late has come.
 I know not where, with my warriors,
 now to seek a home.
 I see the stern old Wâ-te
 before the fourth gate fighting;
 My many friends in the castle,
 I fear indeed must long for us be waiting.
 "Fly from here I cannot;
 no wings for this have I;
 Nor in the earth can hide me,
 whatever else I try.
 Neither from the foeman
 to the waves can we be turning:
 Now, in our lot so wretched,
 what best it is to do from me be learning.
 "Good knights of mine, now hearken;
 there's nothing left to do
 But, to the ground alighting,
 their hot life's-blood to hew
 From out the ringed armor:
 fear not the word I've given."
 Then, from their saddles leaping,
 their horses back at once from them were driven.
 "Now on, brave knights and warriors!"
 Hartmut called to all;
 "To the castle-gates press nearer,
 whatever may befall.
 I yet must meet old Wâ-te,
 whether I live or am dying;
 To drive him from the gateway,
 and from the walls, I will at least be trying."
 Soon, with swords uplifted,
 rushing on were seen
 The brave and youthful Hartmut,
 and with him all his men.
 He fell upon grim Wâ-te,
 who met his coming gladly;
 Now their sword-blades clattered,
 and many knights lay dead, or wounded badly.
 When Wâ-te saw young Hartmut
 the onslaught on him make,
 While Fru-te bore the banner,
 in wrath old Wâ-te spake:
 "I hear the swords loud ringing
 of many pressing near us;
 I beg, dear cousin Fru-te,
 let none come out from the gates; from that now spare us."
 Then Wâ-te, wild with anger,
 did on King Hartmut run;
 But he, so brave and daring,
 the onset would not shun.
 The sun with dust was darkened,
 now from the struggle rising:
 Their strength was unabated;
 still for good name they fought, that both were prizing.
 What helped it that of Wâ-te
 men said he was as strong
 As six and twenty warriors?
 Though this was on each tongue,
 Yet still to him young Hartmut
 his knightly skill was showing:

Howe'er his foe was striving,
 the Norman lord and his men no less were doing.
 A knight he was most truly,
 and well indeed he fought;
 Of the dead there lay a mountain
 whom on the field he smote.
 It was, forsooth, a wonder
 that Hartmut had not yielded,
 And died before old Wâ-te:
 grim was the wrath from which himself he shielded.
 Soon heard he, loudly shrieking,
 old King Ludwig's wife;
 Sorely she was mourning
 the loss of her husband's life.
 She said she would reward him
 who felt his death past bearing,
 And would Gu-drun be slaying,
 with all the maids who there her lot were sharing.
 Then ran a worthless fellow,
 to whom the fee was dear,
 To where the Hegeling maidens
 sat together near.
 Then the hearts of the women
 with many fears he loaded;
 For the sake of gold to be given,
 to take their lives he now was sharply goaded.
 When that Hilda's daughter
 against her saw him bear
 A sharp and naked weapon,
 she well indeed might fear,
 And mourn that, far from kindred,
 she was thus forsaken.
 Had not young Hartmut seen it,
 the knave her head from her would then have taken.
 She so forgot her breeding
 that now she screamed aloud,
 As if in dread of dying;
 great fear made wild her mood.
 'Twas the same with all her maidens,
 there beside her seated,
 From out the window gazing;
 the ladies such behavior ill befitted.
 At once the sound of her wailing
 to Hartmut made her known;
 And greatly did he wonder
 what made her scream and moan.
 Soon he saw a ruffian
 whose sword was near to falling,
 As if he meant to kill her.
 Loudly now to him 'gan Hartmut calling:
 "Who are you, low-born dastard?
 For what reward or need
 Do you affright these maidens,
 and seek to strike them dead?
 If you shall strike one lady,
 I give you now this warning,
 Your life shall quick be ended;
 your kinsmen too shall hang, this very morning."
 Back then sprang the rascal,—
 his anger he did fear;
 For now the youthful Hartmut
 held his life not dear,
 When to the homeless maidens
 he his help was giving:
 With care was he o'erladen,
 while from grim death to free them he was striving.
 Quickly then came Ortrun,
 she of Norman lands,
 The fair and youthful princess;
 in woe she wrung her hands.
 She to Gu-drun came nearer,
 the stately, high-born maiden,

And, at her feet down-falling,
 bewept her father's death, with sorrow laden.
 She said: "Most queenly lady,
 do not your tears forbear,
 For all my many kinsmen
 who death together share.
 Bethink you, if you also
 a father slain were weeping,
 How you would feel, great princess.
 My father slain I mourn, in death now sleeping.
 "Behold, most high-born maiden,
 my woe and bitter need;
 How almost all my kinsmen
 lie, with my father, dead:
 And now the knightly Hartmut
 is death from Wâ-te fearing.
 If I should lose my brother,
 bereft of kindred, nought could life be cheering.
 "Reward the love I've shown you,"
 said the Norman maid.
 "Of all that saw your sorrow,
 when none a tear did shed,
 I then alone was friendly,
 and had you in my keeping;
 For all the wrongs they did you,
 I the livelong day for you was weeping."
 Queen Hilda's daughter answered:
 "Thou wast indeed my friend;
 But yet this strife so deadly
 I know not how to end.
 Were I indeed a warrior,
 and knightly weapons wearing,
 I'd stop the fighting gladly;
 and none to slay your brother then were daring."
 Ortrun was sorely weeping;
 she still the maid besought,
 Until within the window
 Gu-drun at length she brought,
 Who with her hand then beckoned,
 and begged that it be told her
 If from the land of her fathers
 knights had come who did in friendship hold her.
 Then the knightly Herwic
 answer thus did make:
 "Who are you, young maiden,
 who news from us do seek?
 We are not the Hegelings,
 whom you see so near you;
 We hither come from the Sealands.
 Tell us, maiden, how we now can cheer you?"
 "This do I beseech you,"
 said the queenly maid:
 "Sore has been the fighting;
 him will I thank, indeed,
 Who now cuts short the struggle.
 Me will he be cheering
 Who from the hands of Wâ-te
 will Hartmut free in the strife that I am fearing."
 Then asked the well-bred warrior
 who from the Sealands came:
 "Tell me, worthy maiden,
 what may be your name?"
 She said: "Gu-drun they call me,
 of Hagen's blood I own me;
 Altho' my birth was lofty,
 of late but little love has here been shown me."
 He said: "If you, fair lady,
 my dear Gu-drun can be,
 Then faithfully to help you
 gladness will give to me;
 For I, in truth, am Herwic;
 you for my own I have chosen,

And fain am I to show you
 how you from bonds of sorrow I can loosen."
 She said: "If you would help me,
 my good and worthy knight,
 I trust that you will grant me
 that what I ask is right:
 To me these lovely maidens
 their prayers are ever making,
 That from the fight with Wâ-te
 some friendly hand will Hartmut soon be taking."
 "That will I do right gladly,
 dearest lady mine."
 Then to his men young Herwic
 called above the din:
 "Now against old Wâ-te
 let my flag be carried."
 Herwic then pressed forward,
 and none of all his men behind him tarried.
 To do the lady's bidding
 hard it was for him;
 But Herwic called out loudly
 to Wâ-te old and grim,
 And said, "My dear friend Wâ-te,
 to grant my wish be ready:
 Let strife be ended quickly:
 this is the prayer of many a lovely lady."
 Then spake in wrath old Wâ-te:
 "Sir Herwic, get you gone!
 Did I mind the will of a woman,
 how should I do my own?
 If I thought to spare the foeman,
 unasked I'd do it even.
 I will not do your bidding:
 Hartmut to pay for his sins must now be driven."
 Herwic, for love of his lady,
 on both the fighters sprang
 Right fearlessly and boldly;
 loud the sword-blades rang.
 Wâ-te was wild with anger,
 and bitter pain it gave him
 That, ere the foeman yielded,
 Herwic from his hand should dare to save him.
 Then he smote King Herwic
 a strong and heavy blow,
 Ere he could part the fighters,
 and quickly laid him low;
 Now rushed the men of Herwic,
 and did from Wâ-te bear him.
 Hartmut was seized and taken,
 though Herwic and his knights had sought to spare him.

Tale the Twenty-Ninth. HOW HARTMUT WAS TAKEN PRISONER.

Wâ-te loud was storming;
 then went he towards the hall
 That stood before the gateway.
 On every side did fall
 The din of sword-blades clashing,
 of groaning and of weeping.
 Hartmut was in bondage;
 ill luck alone his liegemen, too, were reaping.
 With him were also taken
 eighty warriors brave;
 The others all were slaughtered.
 Hartmut his life did save,
 But to a ship was carried,
 and fast and long they kept him.
 Not yet was sorrow ended;
 greater ills must they know who now bewept him.
 Though often from the stronghold
 Wâ-te's men they drove,

Both with slings and arrows,
yet still he grimly strove,
And won from them the castle.
The heavy bolts were broken
That once the gates had fastened;
at this fair women wept, with fear outspoken.
Horant, the lord of Denmark,
Queen Hilda's flag now bore;
Him followed many warriors,
he might not wish for more.
Up to a palace tower
that high its walls was rearing,
Far above all others,
the Hegeling men the banner soon were bearing.
As I have told already,
the castle now was won:
To those they found within it
grimmiest deeds were done.
Great was the crowd on-pressing,
for booty to enrich them.
Then cried the stern old Wâ-te:
"Where are now the sacks, and youths to fetch them?"
Now was broken open
many a well-filled room;
Loud was the din and uproar
that from within did come:
But all were not like-minded
who the halls were thronging;
While wounds were dealt by many,
others for plunder searched, for riches longing.
They bore so much from the castle,
as we have heard it told,
That such a heavy burden
two ships could never hold:
Richest silken clothing,
silver and gold, were taken,
To load the ships on the waters;
tho' much they took, yet much must be forsaken.
Now within the castle
joy was all unknown.
To all the folk there gathered
the greatest wrongs were done;
Men alike and women
were slain who there were dwelling:
To children in their cradles,
even to them, the foemen death were dealing.
Irold then to Wâ-te
thus his mind made known:
"Of harm to you these children
devil-a-bit have done.
They indeed are blameless,
nor hate to our kin were showing;
For the love of God, I beg you,
spare the poor babes, some pity now bestowing."
The aged Wâ-te answered:
"Thou hast the mind of a child;
Tho' now in the cradle wailing,
say, wouldst thou have willed
That I should leave them living?
As soon as they are older,
They never can be trusted;
to trust a Saxon wild would be no bolder."
Blood throughout the castle
flowed on every side.
Those who saw the slaughter,
how bitterly they cried!
Now the high-born Ortrun,
filled with care and sorrow,
Sought Gu-drun, kind maiden:
she feared yet greater wrongs before the morrow.
Then, her head low bending
before the lovely maid,

She said: "Gu-drun, my lady,
have pity on my need,
And, in my sharpest sorrow,
leave me not forsaken;
I trust me to your kindness,
or else my life will by your friends be taken."
"Gladly will I shield you,"
she answered, "if I can;
Ever to do you kindness,
and help you, I am fain.
I will gain for you forgiveness;
no more for life be fearing.
Your maids and women also
must stand near me, my care they, too, are sharing."
"This doth make me happy,"
the youthful Ortrun said.
With three and thirty maidens,
she was kindly kept and fed;
Warriors two and sixty
there the ladies guarded:
If they should gain their freedom,
their keepers would be slain, and thus rewarded.
The old and wicked Gerlind
ran to Gu-drun in haste;
As if she were her bondwoman,
herself at her feet she cast,
Saying: "Most high-born lady,
thou alone canst save us
From Wâ-te and his followers;
else will his wrath, I ween, of life bereave us."
To her said Hilda's daughter:
"I hear you asking now
That I to you be friendly;
how should I kindness show?
Nought that e'er I wished for
to grant me were you willing:
To me you showed but hatred;
and now my heart with hate for you is swelling."
That Ortrun then was near him
Wâ-te became aware:
He his teeth was gnashing,
and straight up-stood he there;
Now his eyes were flashing;
his yard-wide beard was flowing;
And all were sorely frightened,
and feared what the Sturmisch lord would next be doing.
Over him blood was streaming,
with it his clothes were wet.
Tho' Gu-drun was glad to see him,
she had liked it better yet
If he, in mood less wrathful,
had come for her to greet him;
Such fear they all were feeling,
I ween that no one there was glad to meet him.
To meet her friend, old Wâ-te,
went Gu-drun alone;
Then said Hilda's daughter,
with sad and care-fraught tone:
"Welcome art thou, Wâ-te!
How glad would be my greeting,
If now these folk so many
no evil from thy hand should here be meeting."
"I thank you, fair young maiden!
Are you Queen Hilda's child?
Who are these many women,
whom here you seek to shield?"
"This," said Gu-drun, in answer,
"is Ortrun, high in breeding;
I beg you, Wâ-te, spare her:
her women here your wrath are sorely dreading.
"Those there are wretched maidens,
from far across the sea,

Brought from the Hegeling kingdom
 by Ludwig's men with me.
 But you are wet and bloody;
 do not come so near us:
 For all your help we thank you,
 nor in our woe do scorn the love you bear us."
 Wâ-te went on further,
 and Herwic soon he found,
 And with him youthful Ortwin,
 as king in Ortland owned.
 Irold was there and Morunc;
 Fru-te had thither hasted:
 None of these were idle;
 many they slew, nor soon from slaughter rested.
 Quickly then came Hergart,
 the lady of a duke,
 And said: "Gu-drun, good lady,
 on me with kindness look,—
 On me, a wretched woman.
 Forget not that we ever
 Have been and are your handmaids;
 and let me, lady, lose thy friendship never."
 Gu-drun in anger answered:
 "Stand back, come not so near!
 Whatever we poor maidens
 of wrong have had to fear,
 For all you wept but little,
 and cared for it but slightly.
 Not much do I care either
 whether for you it now goes ill or rightly.
 "You still among my maidens
 may linger, if you choose."
 Now the stern old Wâ-te
 looked round among his foes,
 To find the wicked Gerlind,
 whom he in wrath was seeking.
 That devilish crone, with her women,
 the kindness of Gu-drun was now bespeaking.
 Grimly then old Wâ-te
 stood before the hall,
 And said: "Gu-drun, my lady,
 send down, with her maidens all,
 The old and wicked Gerlind,
 who made you wash by the water;
 And with her send her kinsmen,
 who in our land so many knights did slaughter."
 The lovely maiden answered:
 "Not one of them is here."
 Then Wâ-te, in his anger,
 went in and to her came near;
 He said: "Now show me quickly
 the women I am seeking;
 Else shall they, with your maidens,
 all alike in the grave their home be making."
 Wâ-te was sorely angry,
 of this was she aware.
 A wink of her eye then gave him
 a lovely maiden there,
 And he knew the old she-devil,
 on whom her glance was turning.
 "Tell me," he said, "Queen Gerlind,
 for other maids to wash are you still yearning?"
 Then by the hand he took her,
 and dragged her thence away;
 The while the wicked Gerlind
 sank down in sore dismay.
 Said Wâ-te, wild to madness:
 "Most lofty queen, I warn you,
 Never again, at your bidding,
 shall my ladies wash for you; they now can scorn you."
 I ween that when he brought her
 without the palace gate,

All looked on to witness
 what he would do in his hate.
 Then by the hair he grasped her,
 no one a whit he dreaded,
 His wrath indeed was bitter,
 and at once the evil queen he there beheaded.
 Loudly shrieked the maidens,
 their fright at this was sore.
 Back again went Wâ-te,
 and said: "Who is there more,
 Who to the queen owns kinship?
 To me you now must show her;
 However high she holds her,
 I yet to earth her head will quickly lower."
 Sobbing then and weeping,
 the child of Hettel said:
 "Let these with me find shelter,
 who now to me have fled,
 To ask of me forgiveness,
 here my love bespeaking.
 This is the well-born Ortrun,
 who with her Norman maids my help is seeking."
 Those who were forgiven
 she bade stand further back.
 Then, in mood unfriendly,
 the angry Wâ-te spake:
 "Where shall I find young Hergart,
 now of a lord the lady,
 Who here within this kingdom
 to take the love of the king's great lord was ready?"
 None of them would tell him,
 but he to her came near,
 And said: "Were you the owner
 of all this kingdom here,
 Who could in you be looking
 to see so proud a bearing?
 Ill have you served your lady,
 here in the land where you her lot were sharing."
 Then all cried out together:
 "Let her now go free."
 But the aged Wâ-te answered:
 "That can never be;
 I have the care of the women;
 behold my overseeing!"
 With a stroke he her beheaded,
 while the maids in fright behind Gu-drun were fleeing.
 Now from the bloody struggle
 there was a rest for all.
 Then the brave King Herwic
 came to Ludwig's hall,
 Leading in his warriors,
 with stains of blood upon them.
 Gu-drun her welcome gave him;
 her love for him was shown, and kindness done them.
 Soon the knightly Herwic
 his sword from his side unbound:
 He then shook off his armor
 into his shield on the ground,
 And stood before the ladies;
 iron-stained was his body.
 That day, for love of his lady,
 he oft on the field had hewn a pathway bloody.
 With him came Ortwin also,
 who was of Ortland king.
 When Irold came with Morunc,
 the clothes they off did fling
 Worn outside their armor,
 for they were over-heated.
 They wished to see the ladies,
 and hoped by them they would be kindly greeted.
 When now the Danish warriors
 were both with slaughter spent,

They laid aside their weapons,
 and before the ladies went.
 Shields no longer bore they,
 their helmets were unfastened;
 A very loving welcome
 to give to both the knights Gu-drun then hastened.
 Irold and Morunc with him
 then most lowly bowed
 Before the lovely maiden.
 How well her bearing showed
 That to see these guests so lordly
 she was indeed most willing!
 Right glad and happy truly
 the child of the Hegeling Hilda now was feeling.
 Alike they all were thinking,
 both lords and all their men:
 "Since now we have the castle,—
 the stronghold Kassiane,—
 Of the land are we the masters,
 and everything is ours."
 Soon bade the aged Wā-te
 that men should burn with fire the palace with its towers.
 The Danish Fru-te answered:
 "That may never be;
 In this my queenly lady
 to live must now be free.
 Bid that from out the castle
 men the dead shall carry;
 Then 'twill be the better
 for all our knights who in the land shall tarry.
 "Very strong is the castle,
 wide it is and good;
 Bid from the walls now everywhere
 to wash away the blood,
 That for a home the maidens
 may not dislike it wholly:
 Then the land of Hartmut
 we will raid throughout, and see it fully."
 They did as Fru-te bade them,
 for wise he was, in truth;
 They bore from out the castle
 many who there, forsooth,
 Were sorely slashed and wounded,
 and many who were dying;
 Then to the waves they carried
 those who before the gates in death were lying.
 They to the sea intrusted
 four thousand of the dead;
 This to them was toilsome,
 but Fru-te thus had bade.
 The work that they were doing
 not as yet was ended;
 Then in Ludwig's castle
 the maid Ortrun was seized, now ill-befriended.
 Two and sixty warriors
 and thirty maidens fair
 With her were also taken.
 Then said Gu-drun: "Forbear!
 The maids are in my keeping,
 my word to them I plighted:
 Wā-te may do as he wishes
 with the knights he seized, until my wrongs are righted."
 Siegfried, king of Moorland,
 found a welcome warm,
 As should to knights be granted
 after the battle-storm.
 Thanks to that worthy warrior
 were by the ladies given,
 That he from the land of Karadie
 so far had come, and so well for them had striven.
 To the care of the Danish Horant
 they their foes did give

Who in the castle of Kassian
 still were left alive.
 To him was Gu-drun intrusted,
 and all her maidens near her:
 To her was he a kinsman;
 they so might hope that he would kindness bear her.
 Him they made the master
 of forty towers strong,
 And six wide, roomy dwellings,
 that stood the shore along.
 Over three rich palaces
 to him was lordship granted,
 And there Gu-drun, the maiden,
 with him must stay, and nought she ever wanted.
 To guard their ships on the waters
 others now they bade;
 Then back to castle Kassian
 Hartmut, the knight, was led
 With many of his kinsmen,
 who in the fight were taken;
 There the Norman ladies,
 seized with the knights, were held, by hope forsaken.
 They bade that care be taken
 that none from them might flee;
 A thousand of their brave ones
 must the women oversee:
 They, with the men from Denmark,
 kept guard in many places.
 Wā-te, meanwhile, with Fru-te,
 sought other foes, and shields to hew in pieces.
 Thirty thousand warriors
 with them the war-path shared.
 Fire was thrown on all sides;
 flames now flashed and flared.
 Throughout the land, the dwellings
 everywhere were burning;
 And now the brave young Hartmut,
 sad at heart, his first true woe was learning.
 The warriors from Sturm-land,
 and they of the Danish land,
 Broke down the well-built castles
 on every hill and strand.
 They took away more plunder
 than foemen ever carried;
 Many lovely women
 the Hegelings seized, the while the land they harried.
 Before the friends of Hilda
 came back thro' the wasted land,
 Six and twenty castles
 fell beneath their hand.
 Happy went they homeward;
 proud were they of their raiding;
 Soon of those there taken
 a thousand or more to Hilda they were leading.
 Throughout the Norman kingdom
 was Hilda's banner seen,
 Waving now unhindered;
 back again her men
 Bore it down to the sea-sand,
 where they had left their lady.
 Here would they stay no longer;
 to seek their homes they all were glad and ready.
 Those who still were resting
 within King Hartmut's halls
 Down to their friends came riding
 from out the castle walls.
 Gladly both old and youthful
 now each other greeted;
 Then asked they of Denmark:
 "Youths, what luck in the raid hath you awaited?"
 To them King Ortwin answered:
 "We there have done so well

That I to those who helped me
 my thanks must ever tell.
 Our foes are well rewarded,
 tho' sore has been the fighting,
 For all the wrongs they did us;
 a thousand-fold have we ourselves been righting."
 Then spake the aged Wā-te:
 "Who best can tarry here
 To guard for us this kingdom?
 Bid now Gu-drun, the fair,
 Come down again to meet us;
 soon shall we be going
 To Hilda's land of the Hegelings;
 and what we bring we will to her be showing."
 Then said they all together,
 both the old and young:
 "To Horant and to Morunc
 doth the warder's task belong;
 They, and a thousand with them,
 here in this land must tarry."
 'Twas done as they had bidden;
 but those who went did many a hostage carry.
 When to go back to Hegeling
 they now made up their minds,
 Then to their ships they carried
 goods of many kinds,
 All they once brought with them,
 and all they had of plunder.
 Gladly they bore their booty;
 on this their friends at home would look with wonder.
 Hartmut now was bidden
 to leave his father's hall,
 With all his bravest warriors,
 five hundred men in all;
 They now were held in bondage
 who had in strife been taken,
 And won from their foes thereafter
 many a weary day, of hope forsaken.
 Ortrun took they likewise,
 the fair and high-born maid;
 On her and on her maidens
 a heavy woe they laid:
 As they away from fatherland
 far from friends were carried,
 They well might know the sorrows
 felt by Gu-drun and her maids, who with them tarried.
 Those whom they had taken
 they bore with them away.
 The castles, overmastered,
 henceforth must own the sway
 Of Morunc and of Horant:
 when they homeward started,
 They left in the Norman kingdom
 a thousand of their men, all fearless-hearted.
 "Now do I beseech you,"
 to them young Hartmut spake,
 "That in my father's kingdom
 my freedom I may take;
 If this to me be granted,
 I pledge my life and riches."
 The aged Wā-te answered:
 "Now in our hands to keep you wisdom teaches.
 "Why it is I know not,
 that 'tis my nephew's will
 To carry home young Hartmut,
 who him would gladly kill,
 And take from him his riches.
 Even before the morrow,
 Were only my nephew willing,
 I would see that his foe no more in bonds should sorrow."
 Then spake the youthful Ortrun:
 "What gain to us would come

If we should slay our foemen
 here in their land and home?
 Hartmut and his kindred
 may better things be hoping;
 Them will I bring to my mother,
 as well beseems a knight to wrong ne'er stooping."
 All their goods and riches
 down to the ships were brought;
 With gold and gems and clothing,
 and horses they were fraught.
 Her whom they had sought for
 they were homeward bringing:
 They who once went mourning
 now on their way were heard in gladness singing.

Tale the Thirtieth. HOW GUDRUN WAS BROUGHT HOME TO HILDA.

Homeward the men of the Hegelings
 gladly took their way;
 But many whom they carried
 erewhile across the sea
 Now lay dead and wounded;
 these must they be leaving:
 Three thousand men or over
 were mourned by friends, who tears to each were giving.
 Now their ships went smoothly,
 the winds for them were good:
 Bearing home their booty
 they came in happy mood.
 How it was done I know not,
 they sent on men before them
 Unto the Hegeling ladies:
 of what had them befallen they tidings bore them.
 With all their speed they hastened,—
 that I well can say,—
 And reached at last their kingdom,—
 I cannot tell the day.
 Never a tale so happy
 had Lady Hilda gladdened
 As this that now they told her:
 Ludwig was slain, who long her life had saddened.
 She asked: "Still lives my daughter,
 and all her maiden band?"
 They answered: "Herwic brings her,
 his own, again to her land.
 Ne'er to so brave a warrior
 it hath befallen better.
 Ortrun, too, they are bringing,
 and Hartmut, her brother; these in bonds they fetter."
 "A happy tale you bring me,"
 said then the well-bred queen;
 "My life with care and sadness
 by them hath cumbered been.
 If e'er my eyes behold them,
 ill shall they be faring:
 Through them have I much sorrow,
 untold and openly, for years been bearing.
 "The news that you have brought me
 a rich reward shall gain;
 For you my heart have lightened
 of hopeless woe and pain.
 Gold I give you freely,
 and this I do most rightly."
 They said: "Most noble lady,
 to make us rich we need your gold but slightly.
 "Of the booty we have gotten
 we're bringing home so much,
 You need not think us scornful
 if your gold we do not touch:
 Indeed, our boats are heavy
 with shining gold they're bearing.

Over all our riches
 keepers we have, who well for it are caring."
 Then did Lady Hilda,
 when she the tidings heard
 That guests so dear were coming,
 for food and drink give word;
 For stools and benches, also,
 on which they should be seated.
 She of all was thoughtful,
 that they might feel that they were fitly greeted.
 Now at Matelan castle
 none were idle found;
 Down on the sandy beaches
 and on the level ground
 Workmen quickly gathered,
 who nought of toil abated
 That fair Gu-drun and Herwic,
 as them beseeemed, should worthily be seated.
 I cannot tell you truly
 if aught upon the sea
 Of ill had them befallen.
 Six long weeks it must be
 Ere Ortwin's men saw Matelan
 at length before them looming.
 They brought with them their lady,
 and many well-bred maids with her were coming.
 When now they reached their homeland,
 this for truth we hear,
 Their search and strife for the lady
 had lasted full a year:
 It was upon a May-time
 their foes they home were bringing.
 Their toils were not forgotten,
 but, as they came, the strand with shouts was ringing.
 Soon as Matelan castle
 now from the ships was seen,
 Of sackbuts and of trumpets
 loud began the din,
 Of horns as well as fluting,
 and drums that men were beating.
 The ships of the aged Wâ-te
 at last in a harbor good their rest were meeting.
 After these came also
 Ortland's warriors brave;
 Then Hilda with her ladies
 to them a welcome gave.
 Out from Matelan's castle
 she to the shore went riding;
 Gu-drun they saw was coming,
 with well-bred maidens wont to do her bidding.
 Alighted from their horses,
 and standing on the sand,
 Were Hilda and all her ladies.
 Then, leading by the hand
 Gu-drun, the lovely maiden,
 came Irold, proud and knightly.
 Though Hilda well had known her,
 yet now she knew her not, nor others rightly.
 Hilda, among the followers
 a hundred women saw;
 She said: "I know not truly
 which one from me should draw
 A mother's loving welcome;
 unknown to me is my daughter:
 I give to all my greeting
 who here with her have come across the water."
 "This is your long-lost daughter,"
 by Irold she was told;
 Hilda to her stepped nearer.
 Could ever wealth or gold
 Outweigh the bliss that filled them,
 as each the other greeted,

And welcome gave with kisses?
 Now from their hearts had all their sorrow fled.
 To Irold and his kinsmen
 kind greeting Hilda said;
 Then to the aged Wâ-te
 a lowly bow she made.
 "Welcome, knight of Sturmland!
 bravely thou hast striven!
 Who can e'er reward thee,
 unless to thee both land and crown are given?"
 He to the lady answered:
 "To help you all I may,
 For that am I most willing,
 e'en to my latest day."
 Then, for love, she kissed him,
 and Ortwin thus she greeted.
 Now came Herwic also,
 with proud and worthy knights, as him befitted.
 Ortrun, the Norman maiden,
 then by the hand he led.
 Gu-drun besought her mother
 kindly to meet the maid:
 "Dear lady, greet with kisses
 this good and high-born maiden;
 Oft in my years of sorrow
 my life with help and kindness she did gladden."
 "To none will I give kisses
 who is to me unknown.
 Who are this maiden's kinsmen?
 What name doth the lady own,
 That you should bid me kiss her,
 and be so friendly with her?"
 He said: "Her name is Ortrun;
 she from the Norman kingdom cometh hither."
 "Never shall I kiss her;
 how can you ask for this?
 If I should bid them kill her
 I should not do amiss.
 Truly have her kinsmen
 filled my life with sorrow;
 They fed their eyes upon it,
 and gladness all the while from this did borrow."
 Gu-drun to Hilda answered:
 "Ne'er hath this lovely maid
 The word to any given
 that wrong on you be laid.
 Bethink you now, dear mother,
 would blame to me be owing
 Should our men slay her kinsmen?
 To the luckless maid, I beg, your love be showing."
 Gu-drun in vain besought her,
 until at last, with tears,
 The maid now begged her mother;
 then gave she willing ears,
 And said: "I can no longer
 see you sadly weeping:
 If e'er the maiden helped you,
 for this shall she, in my land, her life be keeping."
 Then the stately Hilda
 kissed King Ludwig's child,
 And greeted other ladies,
 e'en as Gu-drun had willed.
 Then came also Hildeburg,
 from far-off lands brought thither,
 Erst with her found washing.
 Now, by the hand, Sir Fru-te led her hither.
 Then Gu-drun said further:
 "Mother, most dear to me,
 Your greeting give to Hildeburg.
 What better can there be
 Than true and faithful friendship?
 Gold and jewels even,

Whate'er the kingdom holdeth,
 to Hildeburg most rightly should be given."
 Then said to her Queen Hilda:
 "To me it hath been told
 How she both weal and sorrow
 hath borne with you of old.
 Never shall I sit happy
 beneath the crown I'm wearing,
 Till I indeed reward her
 for all the ills that she with you was sharing."
 At once she kissed the maiden,
 and others, too, as well.
 Then Hilda said to Fru-te:
 "No shame for this I feel,—
 That I have come to meet you
 and those whom you are leading.
 Good knights, you all are welcome
 into the Hegeling land, now homeward speeding."
 As they with thanks were bowing,
 and she her greeting gave,
 Siegfried, king of Moorland,
 drew nearer on the wave,
 And with his warriors, shouting,
 up to the beach was springing:
 A merry song from Araby
 were all, as best they might, together singing.
 Queen Hilda him awaited
 till on the shore he stood.
 Then to the lord of Karadie
 a greeting warm she showed:
 "Sir Siegfried, king of Moorland,
 welcome to you is given;
 It ne'er shall be forgotten
 how you to right my wrongs have ever striven."
 "Lady, if I have helped you,
 to do it I was glad.
 Now must I hasten thither
 to where my home I've had
 Since early days of boyhood,
 ere I thence had ridden
 To war against King Herwic;
 henceforth to strive with him it is forbidden."
 Then they their ships unloaded,
 and up they bore on the sand
 The many things brought with them
 into Queen Hilda's land.
 The night was drawing nearer,
 the air was colder growing;
 The guests no longer waited:
 to seek a shelter they in haste were going.
 Then with the guests Queen Hilda
 rode up on to the plain.
 Before great Matelan castle
 huts and tents were seen
 Bedecked with gold and shining;
 there the guests were seated
 Upon rich seats made ready:
 within the tents were all most kindly treated.
 Such wealth, at Hilda's bidding,
 was brought up to the land,
 That none need leave behind him
 his pledge or bond to stand.
 Never in giving freely
 could any host be vying
 With this most high-born widow:
 no guest need wine or other cheer be buying.
 There the weary rested
 until five days were gone.
 The greatest care and kindness
 unto the guests were shown;
 But Hartmut greatly sorrowed—
 no happiness it gave him—

Until the lovely maiden
 begged Queen Hilda would in freedom leave him.
 Then Ortwin went with his sister
 where Hilda had her seat.
 She said: "My dearest mother,
 never this forget,—
 We must not reward with evil
 him who a wrong is doing.
 Of your worthy name bethink you;
 you should on Hartmut smile, forgiveness showing."
 She answered: "Dearest daughter,
 you do not ask aright:
 I at the hands of Hartmut
 the greatest ills have met;
 He must atone in bondage
 for all his wrongful dealing."
 Then at the feet of Hilda
 Gu-drun fell down, with sixty maidens, kneeling.
 Then spake the lady Ortrun:
 "In freedom let him live;
 To you will he be faithful,
 for this my word I give.
 Be to my brother friendly,
 nor of your love be sparing;
 'Twill be to you an honor
 if he again the kingly crown be wearing."
 His friends all wept together
 that he in bondage sat,
 Wearing chains so heavy;
 their eyes with tears were wet:
 Much they pitied Hartmut,
 no more his kingdom swaying.
 On him and on his followers
 fetters fast and strongest now were weighing.
 Then spake to them Queen Hilda:
 "Leave your weeping now;
 Their chains will I unloosen;
 they to my court may go:
 But not to seek their freedom
 they their word must give me,
 And with an oath must swear it,—
 not hence to ride unbidden, nor to leave me."
 Now the noble bondsmen
 were from chains set free.
 Gu-drun then bade these warriors
 to bathe them in the sea;
 Then, in finest clothing,
 men to court must lead them.
 Knights were they most worthy;
 and so the more, good luck did ever speed them.
 There among the others
 Hartmut now was seen;
 Never a braver warrior
 or better knight had been:
 E'en now, amid his sorrows,
 such a mien was he wearing,
 It seemed as if a pencil
 had drawn him there, and a parchment him was bearing.
 Now on him with kindness
 did all the ladies look,
 While he, their friendship trusting,
 greater boldness took.
 Ill-will, that erst was borne him,
 none were longer feeling;
 It was by all forgotten
 what wounds they erst had been to each other dealing.
 Herwic now bethought him
 from the land of the Hegeling
 How he might be going.
 He bade his men to bring
 His clothing and his weapons,
 and on the horses load them:

When this was known to Hilda,
 to let them go no ready will she showed them.
 She said: "My good Lord Herwic,
 I beg you longer stay!
 All your love and kindness
 a weight on me doth lay.
 Not yet with my good wishes
 may you hence be riding;
 Before you yet shall leave me,
 there shall be high times for the guests with me abiding."
 To her Lord Herwic answered:
 "Lady, you know the way,
 How those who send their kinsmen
 to lands which others sway
 Again at home to see them
 are always greatly longing:
 With pain our friends are waiting
 until again they see us homeward thronging."
 Then spake again Queen Hilda:
 "Grudge not, I beg, to me
 One happiness and honor,
 for none can greater be;
 Herwic, king most worthy,
 the boon now deign to give me,
 That I, poor lonely woman,
 may see my daughter crowned, ere she shall leave me."
 For this was he unwilling;
 but still she begged and bade:
 Thereby those held in bondage
 were soon from sorrow freed.
 When now at last he told her
 that to do it he was willing,
 Then the Lady Hilda
 was glad in heart, and rest of mind was feeling.
 Seats were made at her bidding,
 yet more and better still,
 Which many knights with honor,
 near Hilda, soon did fill,
 When came the high times merry,
 that now were widely bruited.
 To crown Gu-drun, the fair one,
 King Herwic bade, for him it now well suited.
 Of those who him had followed
 there went away not one
 Before at Matelan castle
 the high times were begun.
 Then by Lady Hilda
 was clothing kindly given
 To sixty maids or over:
 for praise and honor she had ever striven.
 To full a hundred women
 clothing good she gave:
 None of those were slighted,
 but all her care did have,
 Who from their homes were taken;
 these had clothes the rarest.
 The gifts indeed were wondrous
 that Hilda gave, of queens the best and fairest.
 Irold must guard the treasure;
 to dwell in Hilda's home
 That knight erelong was bidden,
 and quickly did he come:
 Wâ-te, he of Sturmland,
 must carve the meat at table;
 They also sent for Fru-te,
 to come to her as soon as he was able.
 Her cup-bearer she made him;
 thereon thus spake the knight:
 "That will I be most gladly,
 if now you think it right.
 A fief you then will give me,
 with banners twelve to show it;

Then am I lord in Denmark."
 Queen Hilda smiled, but never thought to do it.
 To Fru-te thus she answered:
 "That gift is not for thee;
 For still your nephew Horant
 Daneland's lord must be.
 You, in his stead, for friendship,
 must now our cup be filling;
 And, while he is with the Normans,
 kindly to care for him must you be willing."
 The men and maids in waiting
 all to their tasks were set:
 Silken clothes were called for;
 a hoard both rich and great,
 In rooms and chests long treasured,
 Queen Hilda bade them open.
 These were brought by stewards,
 and all the guests to them were freely holpen.
 Of these the very lowest
 had clothing of the best.
 If others than the Normans
 were bidden to the feast,
 Or why they called them thither,
 I have no way of telling:
 Full thirty thousand were they
 whom there they brought, in Norman lands once dwelling.
 Clothes for all were wanted,
 but where could these be found?
 If e'en the wealth of Araby
 any there had owned,
 I ween he could no better
 or finer clothes have given
 Than now they shared so freely: that this should be, Gu-drun her
 best had striven.
 Soon as this lovely maiden
 by the guests had now her seat,
 She sent for her brother Ortwin,
 and did his coming wait,
 That she the word might give him
 to be fair Ortrun's lover;
 She, King Ludwig's daughter,
 beside Gu-drun was seated then, as ever.
 Ortwin, lord of Ortland,
 made haste to his sister's bower:
 Him welcomed many a maiden
 who sat with her that hour.
 Then, from her seat arising,
 by the hand she kindly took him;
 And him aside then leading,
 at the further end of the hall she thus bespoke him,
 Saying: "Dearest brother,
 hear what for you is best;
 All that I shall tell you
 comes from a faithful breast.
 If you for bliss are hoping,
 so long as you are living,
 Then for Hartmut's sister
 you must, as best you may, henceforth be striving."
 To her young Ortwin answered:
 "Now think you this is well?
 I and her brother Hartmut
 never as friends can feel;
 We slew their father Ludwig,
 and, when to me she's wedded,
 Of him will she be thinking;
 then with her sighs I oft shall be upbraided."
 "You such love must show her
 that for him she will not long.
 If now this word I give you,
 'tis from a love as strong
 As I have had for any,
 or e'er in my life was feeling.

Should she to you be wedded,
 your bliss with her will be beyond all telling.”
 Then said her knightly brother:
 “If she to you is known,
 And now you think the Hegelings
 will her for a mistress own,
 Gladly will I love her,—
 a maid of such high-breeding.”
 Him Gu-drun then answered:
 “You’ll ne’er a sorry day with her be leading.”
 Of this he spoke to others,
 but Hilda’s word was nay;
 He told it unto Herwic,
 to hear what he would say,
 Who held it right and worthy;
 then to Fru-te speaking,
 That friend would have him woo her,
 “for many knights will she your own be making.
 “Soothed should be the hatred
 that we each other bore;
 Of how it may be ended,
 I now will tell you more;
 Then,” said the Danish Fru-te,
 whose word was ever heeded,
 “Hildegurg, the maiden,
 to young King Hartmut also must be wedded.”
 The wise and upright Herwic
 with faithful words thus spake:
 “I deem it right and fitting
 the maiden him should take;
 When in the land of Hartmut
 she is queen and lady,
 A thousand lordly castles
 to own her sway will there be glad and ready.”
 Then to the high-born Hildegurg
 Gu-drun the fair thus spake,
 With words unheard by others:
 “Care for your weal I’ll take;
 If I may well reward you,
 my friend and playmate dearest,
 For all the love you’ve shown me,
 soon in the Norman land a crown thou wearest.”
 To her then said fair Hildegurg:
 “For me it were not well
 To give my troth to any
 who ne’er his love did tell,
 Nor unto me, in fondness,
 e’er his heart was turning;
 Should we grow old together,
 I fear between us oft there’ll be heart-burning.”
 Her Gu-drun thus answered:
 “Give not a thought to that:
 I soon will send to Hartmut,
 and bid him answer straight
 Whether he now would like it
 if from his pledge I free him,
 As well as all his followers,
 and send him home, that his friends again may see him.
 “If he his thanks shall tell me,
 I then in turn will bid
 That he by deeds shall show it,
 and shall my wishes heed.
 I then will freely ask him
 if he will wed a maiden,
 That I and all my kinsmen
 may him with love and friendship ever gladden.”
 To her they brought young Hartmut,
 king of the Norman land,
 And with him came old Fru-te.
 Near her, on either hand,
 Proud Hildegurg and Ortrun
 within her bower were sitting;

If the lady’s word they heeded,
 their many woes they both would be forgetting.
 Hartmut, the son of Ludwig,
 went through the palace hall;
 To him a friendly greeting
 was given by one and all,
 Alike both high and lowly
 from their seats arising.
 None than he was braver;
 no worth or greatness e’er in him was missing.
 He by Gu-drun, fair lady,
 to seat himself was told;
 And neither of the others
 her greeting did withhold.
 Then said Queen Hilda’s daughter:
 “I beg you to be sitting
 Near my faithful maidens,
 who washed with me for your knights, as was befitting.”
 “This in scorn you bid me,
 fair and lovely queen!
 Whatever wrong was done you
 truly gives me pain:
 ’Twas by my mother’s wishes
 that this from me was hidden;
 To keep it from my father,
 and from his knights as well, were all men bidden.”
 To him the maiden answered:
 “My wish I may not hide:
 I now, in truth, Sir Hartmut,
 must speak with you aside.
 I and yourself, we only,
 may hear what I am saying.”
 Hartmut then bethought him:
 “May God now grant she is not falsely playing.”
 No one else but Fru-te
 allowed she to come near;
 Then the high-born maiden
 said in Hartmut’s ear:
 “If you to me will hearken,
 and do what I shall tell you
 With ready heart and freely,
 now of all your sorrows I will heal you.”
 “Well I know your wisdom,”
 then young Hartmut said;
 “Of aught that is unworthy
 I need not be afraid.
 My heart for nothing wishes,
 unless to do your bidding:
 Gladly, high-born lady,
 to all that you shall say will I give heeding.”
 She said: “My wish I tell you,
 and now your life would cheer;
 I, and my kinsmen with me,
 will give you a helpmeet fair.
 To keep both land and honor
 you may thus be seeking.
 And of the hate we bore you
 none shall evermore a word be speaking.”
 “Who is it, say, fair lady,
 that you for me will choose?
 Ere yet my love I give her,
 life would I rather lose
 Than ever that my kinsmen
 her with scorn were eying;
 For me it were far better
 that I in death upon the field were lying.”
 “I will give your sister Ortrun,
 the maid beloved and fair,
 To be a wife to my brother,
 himself to me most dear.
 You must wed with Hildegurg,
 of a king the well-born daughter:

Never a dearer maiden
 you in the world could find, where'er you sought her."
 "If this indeed may happen,"
 then young Hartmut said,
 "And now your brother Ortwin
 shall take that lovely maid,
 My dear-loved sister, Ortrun,
 and she to him is wedded,
 Then I will woo fair Hildeburg;
 thus hate will end, nor longer shall be dreaded."
 She said: "To this I've brought him;
 his troth to her he gave.
 If now 'twould make you happy
 your father's lands to have,
 And again within his castles
 that you should soon be living,
 You well may wed with Hildeburg,
 and there the queenly crown to her be giving."
 He said: "That pledge I gladly,
 and on it give my hand;
 As soon as the king of Ortland
 shall with my sister stand,
 And both the crown have taken,
 then I, no more forbearing,
 Will, with lovely Hildeburg,
 among our men our lands and fiefs be sharing."
 When he his word had plighted,
 then said the high-born maid:
 "Now will I do gladly
 a further friendly deed;
 Unto the lord of Karadie
 for a wife will I be giving
 The sister of King Herwic,
 that she with him may evermore be living."
 I ween that never hatred
 was smoothed as now was done:
 Brave knights who long were foemen
 now became as one.
 Fru-te, the lord of Daneland,
 thought it right and fitting
 Soon to send for Ortwin;
 also the Moorland king must them be meeting.
 When they to court were coming,
 finest clothes they wore.
 The news Gu-drun had told them
 others to Wâ-te bore;
 To Irold, too, they gave it,
 as soon as he came thither;
 This aside they talked of,
 and fitting speech long time they held together.
 Then spake the aged Wâ-te:
 "Peace we can never know
 Until Ortrun and Hartmut
 to Hilda, the queen, shall go,
 And ask of her forgiveness,
 down at her feet low bending.
 Only if she allows it,
 can we be friends, and hatred have an ending."
 Then spake Gu-drun, the high-born:
 "This I can truly say:
 To them is she not unfriendly;
 Ortrun wears to-day
 Such clothes as by my mother
 to me and my maids were given.
 I'll gladly gain forgiveness;
 in me they all may trust, from home now riven."
 Within a ring of maidens
 Ortrun then they set,
 And with her also Hildeburg,
 of birth both high and meet:
 Ortwin then and Hartmut
 led them out to wed them.

"I hope," said Lady Hilda,
 "that now, forever, we our friends have made them."
 When to his side young Ortwin
 did the maiden Ortrun bring,
 Lovingly and kindly,
 he took a golden ring,
 And this upon the finger
 of her fair white hand he fitted.
 Then far off were driven
 the many woes that late her life had greeted.
 Hartmut around fair Hildeburg
 then his arms did throw;
 Each on the hand of the other
 did a golden ring bestow.
 The lovely maid was blameless,
 and sorrow gave him never;
 Of him and of fair Hildeburg
 nothing their faithful hearts thro' life could sever.
 Then said Queen Hilda's daughter:
 "Herwic, my lord most dear,
 Say, does the land of your fathers
 lie to us so near
 That men could bring your sister,
 if this by us were needed,
 Here to my mother's kingdom,
 that she to the lord of Karadie may now be wedded?"
 To her King Herwic answered:
 "This will I say to you:
 Your men, if they will hasten,
 in twelve days' time can go;
 But if any to your kingdom
 the maiden would be leading,
 Ill luck, I ween, awaits him,
 unless with him my own good knights be speeding."
 Then answered Hilda's daughter:
 "Your help, I beg you, grant;
 By doing this, of happiness
 you nought shall ever want.
 To your men both food and clothing
 my mother will be giving;
 Only bring us the maiden,
 that I may thank you, long as you are living."
 To her then said Lord Herwic:
 "How can she be clad?
 The mighty lord of Karadie
 a waste of my kingdom made;
 There he burned my castles,
 and of her clothes bereft her."
 Then said the king of Moorland:
 "Her would I woo, if only a smock were left her."
 To bring the maid then Herwic
 a hundred warriors sent;
 He bade his men to hasten
 when on their way they went.
 He begged that Wâ-te and Fru-te
 would with them go riding:
 This was to them a burden;
 but yet the worthy knights both did his bidding.
 With greatest speed they hastened,
 both by day and night,
 Until they found the maiden.
 Wâ-te they feared would fight,—
 'Gainst this did Herwic's liegemen
 give their careful heeding.
 Soon from her home the lady,
 with four and twenty maids, the knights were leading.
 By Wâ-te they were guided
 from the castle down to the sand:
 Two ships they found, with row-boats,
 lying by the strand;
 One of these they seized on,
 and, helped by breezes blowing,

They fast away were sailing;
 throughout twelve days they to their homes were going.
 When to the land of the Hegelings
 they had brought the maid,
 Many knights bethought them
 over the sand to speed,
 To meet the lovely lady,
 and all with banners hasted.
 They who had brought the maiden
 had kept their oaths, nor from the task had rested.
 How could any maiden
 a better welcome find?
 Gu-drun went forth to meet her,
 and gave her greeting kind;
 Hilda, with many ladies,
 to see the maiden hasted:
 Nor came King Herwic's sister
 all alone, though with fire her land was wasted.
 She from home was followed
 by full three hundred men.
 Now when the kingly Herwic
 his sister met again,
 He, to show her honor,
 rode forward, proudly dashing;
 So did many others:
 loud were the shields of the knights together clashing.
 Four kings both rich and mighty
 rode to meet her there;
 Thereon the knights 'gan wrangle
 which of the ladies fair
 Was loveliest and fairest.
 Long their time they wasted,
 For all alike were worthy;
 on this at last their wordy war they rested.
 The fair Gu-drun then kissed her
 and those who with her came.
 They walked along the seashore,
 till a tent was seen by them,
 With richest silken hangings;
 while they stood thereunder,
 What now to her should happen
 gave to Herwic's sister greatest wonder.
 Now the king of Karadie
 forthwith to come they bade;
 Then they asked the maiden:
 "Will you this man now wed?
 Kingdoms nine most mighty
 have for their master owned him."
 With him were knights full many,
 yellow in hue, now standing all around him.
 His father and his mother
 were not of faith the same;
 But him, so light in color,
 one might a Christian name.
 Like to gold, spun finely,
 the hair on his head was lying:
 She would choose unwisely
 if she to him her love were now denying.
 She was slow her love to grant him,
 as oft one sees a maid;
 But she to him was given.
 The worthy knight then said:
 "So well I like this lady,
 from love I ne'er can free me.
 Never will I leave her,
 and as her husband men erelong shall see me."
 At last this knight and maiden
 each their troth did plight:
 Both of them scarce waited
 till day should turn to night,
 When, from others hidden,
 they should their bliss be owning.

Soon, 'mid knightly warriors,
 daughters of four rich kings were hallowed for the crowning.

Tale the Thirty-First. HOW THE FOUR KINGS WERE WEDDED IN HILDA'S LAND.

Then the kings were hallowed,
 as in days of yore;
 Also there were knighted
 five hundred men or more.
 Now in Hilda's kingdom
 the folk high times were having;
 It was at Matelan castle,
 before the walls where the sea the sands was laving.
 There the fair Queen Hilda
 to all fine clothing gave.
 How, in the sight of ladies,
 rode Wâ-te old and brave!
 How Irold, too, and Fru-te
 of Daneland, rode before them!
 One heard the spear-shafts broken,
 as these they lowered, and in the onset bore them.
 Lightly the wind was blowing,
 but the dust was dark as night;
 Yet to the maidens' clothing
 the knights gave heeding slight,
 Altho' 'twas soiled and covered
 with the dust thick flying.
 Before the ladies seated,
 riders bold in many a tilt were vying.
 Now at length the maidens
 were left no longer there;
 They, with the queenly Hilda,
 were led to a window near,
 Where the daring champions
 their eyes on them were feeding:
 Beside the four betrothed,
 a hundred well-clothed maids they were thither leading.
 Many wandering players
 there let their skill be shown;
 The best that each was able,
 how gladly was it done!
 When early mass was ended,
 upon the next day's morning,
 And God by them was worshiped,
 knights of the sword again to their games were turning.
 Of uproar and of gladness
 where could more be found?
 Of many tunes and singing
 the halls gave back the sound.
 Until four days were over,
 there the high times lasted:
 Well-born throngs were gathered,
 nor oft the hours in idleness they wasted.
 An open-handed giver,
 that day was Herwic seen.
 He knew the wandering players,
 who there had come again,
 Were bent on growing richer,
 and well for this were striving;
 Herwic meant, in kindness,
 that all, while there, should gain an easy living.
 First the lord of Sealand
 flung his gifts around
 With willing hand so freely
 that thanks from all did sound
 Who saw his love and kindness,
 or heard about it later:
 In ruddy gold King Herwic
 the worth of full a thousand pounds did scatter.
 Clothing, too, was given
 by his friends as well as kin;

Horses finely saddled
 many there did win,
 Who before not often
 on such steeds had ridden.
 When this was seen by Ortwin,
 in giving then he would not be outbidden.
 He, the king of Ortlund
 finest clothes now gave:
 Since then, if better clothing
 knights did ever have,
 Forsooth we cannot tell you,—
 it never reached our hearing.
 He and all his followers
 stood bereft, erelong, of much that they were wearing.
 No one now could reckon
 what store of clothing good
 Was given by those from Moorland.
 There fine horses stood,
 Soon to be given also,—
 such indeed is the saying:
 Those who were to have them
 for better never hoped, nor e'er were praying.
 All were now made richer,
 both the young and old.
 Then, too, was seen King Hartmut;
 nought would he withhold,
 As though his home and kingdom
 had not in war been wasted:
 They saw him give so freely,
 that greater love and kindness none e'er tasted.
 By him and his friendly kinsmen
 who thither with him came,
 And there were held in bondage,
 how readily by them
 Was given what was left them,
 that any from them wanted!
 By Hartmut and his followers
 all that could be asked was gladly granted.
 Gu-drun, the lovely maiden,
 a friendly will e'er bore
 To Hildeburg of Ireland,
 with whom, in days of yore,
 To wash upon the sea-sands
 the clothes she oft was bearing.
 I ween no pains she slighted
 that Hartmut's love her friend might now be sharing.
 Gu-drun then bade her steward
 a hoard of goods to take
 For those who shared her kindness.
 Men of this would speak,
 And say in wealth to give them
 she would ne'er be wanting;
 Heavy gold and silver,
 and clothes, could she to all her friends be granting.
 Before his seat upstanding,
 the Sturmisch lord was seen,
 Clad so well and richly
 that never king nor his men
 Finer clothes or better
 at any time were wearing.
 None long time were waiting
 who hoped that day his kindness to be sharing.
 Above all others, Wâ-te
 gave such clothing there
 That truly never better
 a king was seen to wear;
 With gold and gems it sparkled,
 o'erhung with richest netting:
 Such clothes with him he carried
 when on his way to court he was forth setting.
 In every one of the meshes
 lay a costly stone,

However one might name it;
 thereby it could be known
 That in the land of Abalie
 the gems therein were fitted.
 To Wâ-te and his followers
 all gave the hand, and them with thanks they greeted.
 None of those there gathered,
 who saw the clothes that day,
 Could of the brave old Wâ-te
 this truth indeed gainsay,—
 That beyond the gifts of princes
 his were far outreaching.
 Of wealth he soon was master
 who for these gifts his hand was now outstretching.
 Willingly did Irold
 let them see his mind,
 That he to none was grudging
 gifts of any kind.
 Good care of Hilda's riches
 was Fru-te ever taking:
 He was a faithful steward,
 and long of him thereafter men were speaking.
 The high times now were ended,
 and all their leave would take.
 Then 'twas allowed to Hartmut,
 as well his worth bespake,
 His peace to gain forever;
 to this Gu-drun had brought him.
 Then for their home they started;
 each happier went than he had erst bethought him.
 With friendly love, Queen Hilda
 bade them all farewell;
 With her, Gu-drun and Hildeburg
 went, with kind goodwill,
 Far beyond the castle,
 with all their maids-in-waiting.
 There took they leave of Hartmut,
 when he at last was on his way forth setting.
 A guard Queen Hilda gave them
 across the land and sea;
 Great was the host that Herwic
 and Ortwin now set free,
 Whom, long held in bondage,
 they now were homeward sending;
 Full a thousand followers
 Hartmut brought to his land when the war was ending.
 Everywhere the ladies
 one another kissed.
 Many now were sundered
 who long each other missed,
 And nevermore thereafter
 might again be meeting.
 The high-bred Ortwin and Herwic
 went with them to the boats that for them were waiting.
 Irold must be their leader,
 while they did homeward fare.
 Then by the king 'twas bidden
 that he the word should bear
 To Horant, lord of Denmark,
 how they the land were leaving:
 Soon Irold to the warriors
 guidance and guard unto their homes was giving.
 The time, or late or early,
 in truth I cannot tell,
 When they for their home in Kassian
 did at last set sail.
 The folk, now faring thither,
 were nought but gladness showing;
 After many sorrows,
 God on them was fullest bliss bestowing.
 Irold said to Horant,
 when he reached the Norman land,

That he by the king was bidden
homeward to lead the band.
“To leave to them their kingdom,”
he answered, “it is fitting,
They home have come so gladly;
I, too, to see my land with pain am waiting.”
Then they welcomed Hartmut,
and to him his land did leave;
But how he swayed his kingdom
I now no knowledge have.
With all his friends, then Horant
quickly homeward hasted,
And left the land behind them;
Denmark they reached, nor many days they wasted.
There we now will leave them,
and only this will say:
That never from a wedding
homeward took their way
Happier knights and kinsmen
than now from there were going:
Only the men of Karadie
tarried still in the land, their gladness showing.

Tale the Thirty-Second. HOW THEY ALL WENT TO THEIR HOMES.

Now with the friendly Hegelings
none would tarry more.
Soon on the way to Alzabie
they Herwic’s sister bore,
Shouting all for gladness
that they the maid were bringing;
While, on their watery pathway,
with proud and happy hearts, the knights were singing.
Queen Hilda gave, at parting,
a kind farewell to them.
Tho’ rich were Herwic’s followers
when first to her they came,
Yet gifts she gave full many
to them, when homeward faring.
When one is seen so lavish,
the name of a wonder-worker is he rightly bearing.
Gu-drun then spake to her mother:
“May blessings on you be!
Mourn not for the fallen;
by both my lord and me
Shall love to you be given:
no more you need be feeling
Heaviness or sorrow;
your woes shall Herwic’s kindness now be healing.”
To her Queen Hilda answered:
“Dearest daughter mine,
If you would make me happy,
henceforth must friends of thine
Come to the land of the Hegeling
thrice to see me yearly;
Else must I greatly sorrow,
and never can bear the loss I feel so nearly.”
Then said Gu-drun, the high-born:
“Mother, it shall be done.”
At once, with smiles and weeping,
and glances backward thrown,
She left the castle of Matelan,
with many a friendly maiden.
Her sorrows now were ended:
nought before did ever maids so gladden.
Hither men brought horses,
saddled and fitly bred,
To bear her hence with her maidens;
these their keepers led:
Light were all the breastplates,
and golden-red each bridle.

I ween the ladies wished not
longer far from home to linger idle.
Many, with hair down-flowing,
and decked with gold, rode there;
Methinks from tears and sorrow
none could then forbear,
Who must at last from Ortrun
and from her maids be parted.
Should Ortrun be unhappy,
Gu-drun would then be sad and heavy-hearted.
Ortrun, betrothed to Ortwin,
then her thanks did give
To fair Gu-drun, the queenly,
that she had granted leave
To hold the Norman kingdom
to Hartmut, her knightly brother:
“Gu-drun, may God reward you!
my cares are gone, I ne’er shall know another.”
To her mother Hilda, also,
Ortrun her thanks did say,
That she in Ortland’s kingdom
the crown should wear one day,
Together with King Ortwin,
and there be called his lady.
Then said to her Queen Hilda
that she to grant her this was ever ready.
Ortwin then and Herwic
each to the other swore,
With strong and steady friendship,
that they forevermore
Would sway with right and honor
the lands to them belonging,
And ever would be earnest
to seize and slay whome’er was either wronging.

Eschenbach: Parzival

BOOK I GAMURET

If unfaith in the heart find dwelling, then the soul it shall reap but woe;
And shaming alike and honour are his who such doubt shall show,
For it standeth in evil contrast with a true man's dauntless might,
As one seeth the magpie's plumage, which at one while is black and white.
And yet he may win to blessing; since I wot well that in his heart,
Hell's darkness, and light of Heaven, alike have their lot and part
But he who is false and unsteadfast, he is black as the darkest night,
And the soul that hath never wavered stainless *its* hue and white!
This my parable so fleeting too swift for the dull shall be,
Ere yet they may seize its meaning from before their face 'twill flee,
As a hare that a sound hath startled: yea, metal behind the glass,
And a blind man's dream yield visions that as swift from the eye do pass,
For naught shall they have that endureth! And at one while 'tis bright and sad,
And know of a truth that its glory but for short space shall make ye glad.
And what man shall think to grip me, where no hair for his grasp shall grow,
In the palm of mine hand? The mystery of a close clasp he sure doth know!
If I cry aloud in such peril, it 'seemeth my wisdom well.
Shall I look for truth where it fleeteth? In the fire that the stream doth quell,
Or the dew that the sun doth banish? Ne'er knew I a man so wise,
But was fain to learn the wisdom my fable doth ill disguise,
And the teaching that springeth from it: for so shall he ne'er delay
To fly and to chase as shall fit him, to shun and to seek alway,
And to give fitting blame and honour. He who knoweth the twain to tell,
In their changing ways, then wisdom has tutored that man right well.
And he sits not o'er-long at leisure, nor his goal doth he overreach,
But in wisdom his ways discerning, he dealeth with all and each.
But his comrade, of heart unfaithful, in hell-fire shall his portion be,
Yea, a hailstorm that dims the glory of a knightly fame is he.
As a short tail it is, his honour, that but for two bites holds good,
When the steer by the gad-fly driven doth roam thro' the lonely wood.
And tho' manifold be my counsel not to *men* alone I'd speak,
For fain would I show to women the goal that their heart should seek.
And they who shall mark my counsel, they shall learn where they may bestow
Their praise and their maiden honour; and the manner of man shall know
Whom they freely may love and honour, and never may fear to rue
Their maidenhood, and the true love they gave him of heart so true.
In God's sight I pray all good women to keep them in wisdom's way,
For true shame on all sides doth guard them: such bliss I for them would pray.
But the false heart shall win false honour—How long doth the thin ice last,
If the sun shineth hot as in August? So their praise shall be soon o'erpast.
Many women are praised for beauty; if at heart they shall be untrue,
Then I praise them as I would praise it, the glass of a sapphire hue

That in gold shall be set as a jewel! Tho' I hold it an evil thing,
 If a man take a costly ruby, with the virtue the stone doth bring,
 And set it in worthless setting: I would liken such costly stone
 To the heart of a faithful woman, who true womanhood doth own.
 I would look not upon her colour, nor the heart's roof all men can see,
 If the heart beateth true beneath it, true praise shall she win from me!
 Should I speak of both man and woman as I know, nor my skill should fail,
 O'er-long would it be my story. List ye now to my wonder-tale:
 And this venture it telleth tidings of love, and anon of woe,
 Joy and sorrow it bringeth with it. 'Stead of *one* man if *three* ye know,
 And each one of the three hath wisdom and skill that outweigh my skill,
 Yet o'erstrange shall they find the labour, tho' they toil with a right good-will
 To tell ye this tale, which I think me to tell ye myself, alone,
 And worn with their task and weary would they be ere the work was done.
 A tale I anew will tell ye, that speaks of a mighty love;
 Of the womanhood of true women; how a man did his manhood prove;
 Of one that endured all hardness, whose heart never failed in fight,
 Steel he in the face of conflict: with victorious hand of might
 Did he win him fair meed of honour; a brave man yet slowly wise
 Is he whom I hail my hero! The delight he of woman's eyes,
 Yet of woman's heart the sorrow! 'Gainst all evil his face he set;
 Yet he whom I thus have chosen my song knoweth not as yet,
 For not yet is he born of whom men this wondrous tale shall tell,
 And many and great the marvels that unto this knight befell.
 NOW they do to-day as of old time, where a foreign law holds sway
 (Yea, in part of our German kingdom, as ye oft shall have heard men say),
 Whoever might rule that country, 'twas the law, and none thought it shame
 ('Tis the truth and no lie I tell ye) that the elder son might claim
 The whole of his father's heirdom—And the younger sons must grieve,
 What was theirs in their father's lifetime, they perforce at his death must leave.
 Before, all was theirs in common, now it fell unto one alone.
 So a wise man planned in his wisdom, that the eldest the lands should own,
 For youth it hath many a fair gift, but old age knoweth grief and pain,
 And he who is poor in his old age an ill harvest alone doth gain.
 Kings, Counts, Dukes (and no lie I tell ye) the law holdeth all as one,
 And no man of them all may inherit, save only the eldest son,
 And methinks 'tis an evil custom—So the knight in his youthful pride,
 Gamuret, the gallant hero, lost his Burg, and his fair lands wide,
 Where his father had ruled with sceptre and crown as a mighty king,
 Till knighthood, and lust of battle, to his death did the monarch bring.
 And all men were sore for his sorrow, who truth and unbroken faith
 Bare ever throughout his lifetime, yea even unto his death.
 Then the elder son he summoned the princes from out his land,
 And knightly they came, who rightly might claim from their monarch's hand,
 To hold, as of yore, their fiefdoms. So came they unto his hall,
 And the claim of each man he hearkened, and gave fiefs unto each and all.
 Now hear how they dealt—As their true heart it bade them, both great and small,
 They made to their king petition, with one voice from the people all,
 That to Gamuret grace and favour he would show with true brother's hand,
 And honour himself in the doing. That he drive him not from the land
 But give him, within his kingdom, a fair Burg that all men might see,
 That he take from that Burg his title, and he held of all tribute free!—
 Nor the king was ill-pleased at their pleading, and he quoth, 'A small grace, I trow,
 Have ye asked, I would e'en be better than your prayer, as ye straight shall know,
 Why name ye not this my brother as Gamuret Angevin?

Since Anjou is my land, I think me the title we *both* may win!
 Then further he spake, the monarch, 'My brother in sooth may seek
 Yet more from my hand of favour than my mouth may as swiftly speak,
 With me shall he have his dwelling—I would that ye all should see
 How one mother alike hath borne us; his riches but small shall be,
 While I have enough; of free hand would I give him both lands and gold,
 That my bliss may be ne'er held forfeit by Him, Who can aye withhold,
 Or give, as He deemeth rightful!' Then the princes they heard alway,
 How the king would deal well with his brother, and they deemed it a joyful day!
 And each one bowed him low before him. Nor Gamuret long delayed,
 But he spake as his heart would bid him, and friendly the words he said:
 'Now hearken, my lord and brother, if vassal I think to be
 To thee, or to any other, then a fair lot awaiteth me.
 But think thou upon mine honour, for faithful art thou and wise,
 And give counsel as shall beseem thee, and help as thou shalt devise.
 For naught have I now save mine armour, if within it I more had done,
 Then far lands should speak my praises, and remembrance from men were won!
 Then further he spake, the hero: 'Full sixteen my squires shall be,
 And six of them shall bear harness; four pages give thou to me
 Of noble birth and breeding, and nothing to them I'll spare
 Of all that my hand may win them. Afar in the world I'd fare,
 (Somewhat I ere now have journeyed,) if Good Fortune on me shall smile,
 I may win from fair women favour. If a woman I serve awhile,
 And to serve her she hold me worthy, and my heart speaketh not amiss,
 True knight shall I be and faithful! God show me the way of bliss!
 As comrades we rode together (but then o'er thy land did reign
 The King Gandein, our father), and sorrow and bitter pain
 We bare for Love's sake! At one while I knew thee as *thief* and *knight*,
 Thou couldst serve, and thou couldst dissemble, for the sake of thy lady bright.
 Ah! could I steal love as thou couldst, if my skill were but like to thine,
 That women should show me favour, then a blissful lot were mine!'

'Alas! that I ever saw thee,' spake, sighing, the king so true,
 'Who lightly, with words of mocking, my heart would in pieces hew
 And would fain that we part asunder! One father hath left us both
 A mighty store of riches, I would share with thee, nothing loth.
 Right dear from my heart I hold thee; red gold and jewels bright,
 Folk, weapons, horse, and raiment, take thou as shall seem thee right,
 That thou at thy will mayst journey, and thy free hand to all be known.
 Elect do we deem thy manhood, didst thou Gylstram as birthplace own,
 Or thou camest here from Rankulat, yet still would that place be thine,
 Which thou boldest to-day in my favour; true brother art thou of mine!'

'Sir King, thou of need must praise me, so great is thy courtesy!
 So, courteous, thine aid be given, if thou and my mother free
 Will share with me now your riches, I mount upward, nor fear to fall,
 And my heart ever beateth higher—Yet I know not how I should call
 This life, which my left breast swelleth! Ah! whither wouldst go mine heart?
 I would fain know where thou shalt guide me—'Tis time that we twain should part.'

And all did the monarch give him, yea, more than the knight might crave,
 Five chargers, picked and chosen, the best in his land he gave
 High-couraged, swift to battle; and many a cup of gold,
 And many a golden nugget, for naught would his hand withhold.
 Four chests for the road he gave him, with many a jewel rare
 Were they filled. Then the squires he took him who should for the treasure care,
 And well were they clad and mounted; and none might his grief withhold
 When the knight gat him unto his mother, who her son in her arms did fold.

Spake the woman, as woman grieving: 'Wilt thou tarry with me no more,
 King Gandein's son? Woe is me! yet my womb this burden bore
 And the son of my husband art thou. Is the eye of God waxed blind,
 Or His ear grown deaf in the hearing, that my prayer doth no credence find?
 Is fresh sorrow to be my portion? I have buried my heart's desire,
 And the light of mine eyes; will He rob me, who have suffered a grief so dire,
 Who judgeth with righteous judgment? Then the tale it hath told a lie,
 That spake of His help so mighty, Who doth help unto me deny?'
 'God comfort thee,' quoth the hero, 'for the death of my father dear,
 For truly we both must mourn him—But I think from no lips to hear
 Such wailing for my departing! As valour shall show the way,
 I seek knighthood in distant countries—So it standeth with me to-day.'
 Quoth the queen, 'Since to high love's service thou turnest both hand and heart,
 Sweet son, let it not displease thee to take of my wealth a part
 That may serve thee upon thy journey; let thy chamberlain take from me
 Four chests, each a pack-horse burden, and heavy their weight shall be.
 And within, uncut, there lieth rich silk of Orient rare,
 No man as yet hath cut it, and many a samite fair.
 Sweet son, I prithee tell me what time thou wilt come again,
 That my joy may wax the greater, and I look for thee not in vain!'
 'Nay, that I know not, Lady, nor the land that shall see my face,
 But wherever I take my journey, thou hast shown unto me such grace
 As befitteth knightly honour: and the king he hath dealt with me
 In such wise that grateful service his rewarding shall ever be.
 And this trust have I, O Lady, that for this thou wilt love him more
 Henceforward, whate'er the future yet keepeth for me in store.'
 And as the venture telleth, to the hand of this dauntless knight,
 Thro' the favour he won from a woman, and the working of true love's might,
 Came a token fair, and its value was full thousand marks, I trow,
 E'en to-day an a Jew were craving a pledge, he would deem enow
 Such jewel, and ne'er disdain it—'Twas sent by his lady true,
 And fame did he win in her service, and her love and her greeting knew,
 Yet seldom his pain found easing—Then the hero he took his leave
 Of mother, brother, and brother's kingdom, and many I ween must grieve
 Since his eyes never more beheld them. And all who his friends had been,
 Ere he passed from the land of his fathers, tho' the grace were but small, I ween,
 He gave them of thanks full measure; he deemed they too much had done,
 And, courteous, little thought him, that of right he their love had won!
 Straighter his heart than straightness; did one of his praises speak
 In a full and fitting measure, then doubt were not far to seek,
 But ask ye of those his neighbours, or of men who in distant lands
 Had seen his deeds, then the marvel ye were swifter to understand.
 And Gamuret he trode ever where Temperance aye should guide,
 And naught else might rule his doings, nor he boasted him in his pride
 But bare great honour meekly; from loose ways he e'er had flown;
 And he thought him, the gallant hero, that none bare on earth a crown,
 Were they King, or Queen, or Kaiser, whom he deemed of his service worth
 Were they not the mightiest reckoned of all monarchs that be on earth.
 This will in his heart he cherished—Then men spake, at Bagdad did reign
 A monarch so strong and powerful, that homage he well might claim
 From two-thirds or more of earth's kingdoms. The heathen his name held great,
 And they spake of him as the Baruch, and kings did on his bidding wait,
 And crownèd heads were his servants; and his office it lasts to-day—
 See how Christian men baptized to Rome wend their pilgrim way,
 So there was the heathen custom. At Bagdad was their papal right,

And the Baruch as 'seemed his office purged their sins with his word of might.
From Pompey and Ipomidon, two brothers of Babylon,
Nineveh, the town of their fathers, the Baruch with force had won,
And bravely 'gainst him they battled. Then came the young Angevin,
And the Baruch he showed him favour, yea, he did to his service win
Gamuret the gallant hero—And he deemed it were well he bore
Other arms than Gandein his father had given to him of yore.
Then the hero he well bethought him; on his charger's cloth they laid
An anchor of ermine fashioned, and the same at his will they made
For shield alike and vesture—And green as the emerald rare
Was his riding-gear, and 'twas fashioned and wrought of Achmardi fair,
(’Tis a silken stuff,) and he bade them to make of it at his will
Both blazoned coat and surcoat, (than velvet ’tis richer still;)
And he bade them to sew upon it the anchor of ermine white,
And with golden threads inwoven was the badge of this gallant knight.
And his anchors they never tested or mainland or haven fair
And found in that place abiding—But the hero must further bear
Thro’ many a land, a brave guest, the load of this heraldry,
And behind the sign of this anchor but short space might his resting be,
And nowhere he found abiding—The tale of the lands he saw,
And the vessels in which he sailed him? If the truth unto ye I swore,
On mine own oath must I swear it, and my knightly honour true
In such wise as the venture told me; other witness I never knew!
And men say that his manly courage held the prize in far heathendom,
In Morocco’s land, and in Persia, and elsewhere he high honour won,
At Damascus and at Aleppo, and where knightly deeds should be:
In Arabia and lands around it was he held of all conflict free,
For no man might dare withstand him, he won him such crown of fame;
And his heart for honour lusted, and all deeds were brought to shame,
And became as naught before him, as all men bare witness true
Who a joust with him had ridden, and Bagdad of his glory knew.
And his heart never failed or faltered, but onward his course he bare
To Zassamank’s land and kingdom; there all men wept that hero fair,
Eisenhart, who in knightly service gave his life for a woman’s smile;
Belakané thereto constrained him, sweet maid she, and free from guile.
(Since her love she never gave him, for love’s sake did the hero die.)
And his kinsmen would fain avenge him, and with force and with subtlety
Their armies beset the maiden, but in sooth she could guard her well
Ere Gamuret came to her kingdom, and her wrath on her foemen fell.
For the Prince Friedebrand of Scotland, and his host that against her came
By ship, ere he left her kingdom had she wasted with fire and flame.
Now hear what befell our hero; storm-driven he was that day,
And scarce might he win to safety, and his boat in the haven lay
Beneath the royal palace; and the folk they beheld him there,
And he looked around on the meadow, and he saw many tents stand fair
Around the town, save the sea-coast, and two armies he thought to see.
Then he bade them to tell the story, and whose that fair Burg should be?
Since he knew it not, nor his shipmen—And an answer they straightway gave,
’Twas Patelamunt; then the townsfolk a boon from the knight would crave,
And their speech it was soft and friendly—In the name of their gods they’ld pray
He should help them, so great their peril that in danger of death they lay.
When the young Angevin had hearkened to the tale of their bitter pain,
He proffered to them his service for such payment as knight may gain,
(As it oft shall befit a hero)—They should say for what goodly prize
He should dare the hate of their foemen? And they answered him in this wise

With one mouth the hale and the wounded—Naught would they from him withhold,
But lord should he be of their treasure, of their jewels alike and gold,
A fair life should he lead among them!—But such payment he little sought,
For many a golden nugget from Araby had he brought.
And dark as night were the people who in Zassamank dwelt alway—
And the time it seemed long unto him that he need in their midst must stay—
But he bade them prepare a lodging, and methinks it became them well
The best of their land to give him, since awhile he with them would dwell.
And the women they looked from the windows, and they gazed on the noble knight,
And they looked on his squires, and his harness, how 'twas fashioned for deeds of might.
Then they saw how the knight, free-handed, on his shield of ermine bare
Full many a pelt of sable; the Queen's Marshal he read it fair,
The badge, for a mighty anchor, and little he rued the sight,
If his eye spake the truth unto him ere this had he seen the knight,
Or one who bare his semblance—At Alexandria it needs must be,
When the Baruch besieged the city—and unequalled in strife was he!
So rode the gallant hero, in stately guise and meet;
Ten pack-horses heavy-laden they led first adown the street,
And twenty squires behind them; and his people they went before,
And lackeys, cooks, and cook-boys, at the head of the train they saw.
And stately I ween his household, twelve pages of lineage high
Rode next to the squires, well-mannered, and trained in all courtesy,
And Saracens were among them; and behind them in order fair
Came chargers eight, and a covering of sendal did each one bear.
But the ninth it bore a saddle, and the shield ye have known ere now
Was borne by a squire beside it, and joyful his mien, I trow.
And trumpeters rode behind it, for in sooth they must needs be there,
And a drummer he smote his tambour, and swung it aloft in air.
And as naught had the hero deemed it, this pomp, if there failed to ride
Men who on the flute were skilful, and three fiddlers were at their side,
And they hasted not nor hurried; and behind them the hero came,
And his shipman he rode beside him, a wise man of goodly fame.
And much folk was within the city, and Moors were both man and maid.
Then the hero he looked around him, and, lo! many a shield displayed,
Battle-hewn and with spear-thrust piercèd they hung on each wall and door.
And wailing and woe was their portion; for the knight at each window saw
Many men lie sorely wounded, who to breathe the air were fain,
And e'en tho' a leech might tend them no help might they think to gain
Who were hurt too sore for healing—In the field had they faced the foe,
And such shall be their rewarding who in conflict no flight will know—
Many horses were led towards him, sword-hewn and with lance thrust through;
And on each side stood dusky maidens, and black as the night their hue.
Then his host gave him kindly greeting—and of joy did he reap his meed—
A rich man was he and mighty, and many a knightly deed
With thrust and blow had his hand wrought when his post at the gate he found;
And many a knight was with him, and bandaged their heads and bound,
And their hands in slings were holden; yet tho' sorely wounded still
They did many deeds of knighthood, nor were lacking in strength and skill.
Then the Burg-grave of the city, with fair words did he pray his guest
To deal with him and his household in such wise as should seem him best.
And the host, he led the hero to his wife, and courteously
Did Gamuret kiss the lady, small joy in the kiss had he!
Then they sat them down to the table, and e'en as the feast was o'er,
The Marshal he gat him swiftly to the queen, and the tidings bore,
And craved from her goodly payment, as to messenger shall be due.

And he spake, 'It shall end in gladness, the grief that erewhile we knew,
We have welcomed here, O Lady, a knight of such gallant mien,
We must thank the gods who have sent him, for our need they have surely seen.'
'Now tell me upon thine honour who this gallant knight may be?'
'Lady, a dauntless hero, and the Baruch's man is he,
An Angevin he, of high lineage; Ah me! little did he spare
Himself, when his foemen seeking he forth to the field would fare.
How wisely, with skill and cunning, he avoided the threatening blow,
And turned him again to the onslaught! Much sorrow he wrought his foe—
Ere this have I seen him battle, when the princes of Babylon
Their city of Alexandria had fain from the Baruch won,
And with force from its walls would drive him, and many a man lay dead
In the overthrow of their army, for their venture was but ill-spel.
And such deeds did he do, this hero, that no counsel was theirs but flight:
And there did I hear his praises, for all spake of this gallant knight
As one who, without denial, had won him, in many a land,
The crown of true knightly honour, by the strength of his own right hand.
'Now fain would I speak with the hero, see thou to the time and way;
E'en now might he ride to the castle, for peace shall be kept to-day.
Were it better that I should seek him? He is other than we in face,
Pray Heaven it not displease him, but our need with the knight find grace!
I would that I first might know this, ere the rede from my folk I hear
That I show to this stranger honour—If it pleaseth him to draw near,
Say, how shall I best receive him? Shall the knight be so nobly born
That my kiss be not lost, if I kiss him?' 'Nay, hold me of life forsworn
If he be not of kings the kinsman! Lady, this word I'll bear
To thy princes, that they shall clothe them in raiment both fit and fair,
And stand before thee, in due order, ere yet to thy court we ride,
And the same shalt thou say to thy ladies—In the city he doth abide;
I will ride below, and will bring him to thy palace, a worthy guest,
For no fair or knightly virtue shall be lacking that noble breast.'
But little space they delayed them, for the Marshal, with ready skill,
Strove that all in such wise be ordered as should pleasure his lady's will.
But soon did they bear to the hero rich garments, he did them on,
And this hath the venture told me that their cost should be hardly won;
And thereon lay the anchors, heavy, and wrought of Arabian gold,
For so had he willed. Then the hero, who fair payment for love had told
A charger bestrode that 'fore Babylon a knight rode, for jousting fain,
From the saddle did Gamuret smite him, and I wot it hath wrought him pain.
If his host thought to ride beside him? He and his gallant knights?
Yea, in sooth they would do so, gladly—So wended they up the height,
And dismounted before the palace; and many a knight stood there,
And each, as was fit, had clothed him in raiment both rich and fair.
And his pages they ran before him, and each twain they went hand in hand,
And in marvellous fair arraying he saw many ladies stand.
And the queen, her eyes brought her sorrow as she looked on the Angevin,
So lovely was he to look on that he needs must an entrance win
Thro' the gates of her heart, if 'twere anguish or joy that within he bore,
Tho' her womanhood 'gainst all comers had held them fast closed before.
Then a space did she step towards him, and a kiss from her guest she prayed;
And, herself, by the hand she took him and they sat them, both man and maid
In a window wide, that looked forth from the palace upon the foe,
And a covering of wadded samite was spread o'er the couch below.
Is there aught that than day is lighter? Then it likeneth not the queen!
Yet else was she fair to look on, as a woman should be, I ween,

But unlike to the dew-dipped roses was her colour, yea, black as night.
 And her crown was a costly ruby, and thro' it ye saw aright
 Her raven head. Then as hostess she spake to her guest this word,
 That greatly she joyed at his coming, 'Sir, Knight, I such tale have heard
 Of thy knightly strength and prowess—Of thy courtesy, hear me fair,
 For fain would I tell of my sorrow, and the woe that my heart doth bear!'
 'My help shall not fail thee, Lady! What hath grieved, or doth grieve thee now,
 I think me aside to turn it, to thy service my hand I vow!
 I am naught but one man only—Who hath wronged or now wrongeth thee
 My shield will I hold against him—Little wroth shall thy foeman be!'
 Then a prince he spake out courteous, 'The foe would we little spare,
 Did our host not lack a captain, since Friedebrand hence must fare.
 He defendeth afar his kingdom—A king, one Hernant by name
 (Whom he slew for the sake of Herlindë) his kinsmen against him came,
 And evil enow have they wrought him, nor yet from their strife forbear—
 Yet he left here full many a hero, and among them, Duke Heuteger
 With his gallant deeds of knighthood, and his army, hath pressed us sore,
 They have skill and strength for the conflict. And many a soldier more
 With Gaschier of Normandy came here, and a hero wise is he.
 Many knights hath he brought to this country (and wrathful guests they be):
 Kailet of Hoscurast. All these hath he brought upon our fair land
 With his comrades four, and his soldiers, the Scottish king Friedebrand!
 And there, to the West, by the sea-coast doth Eisenhart's army lie,
 And their eyes shall be fain for weeping; nor in secret, nor openly
 Hath one seen them, and failed to marvel at their grief and their sorrow sore,
 Since their lord hath been slain in battle with the heart's rain their eyes run o'er.'
 Then the guest courteous spake to his hostess, 'I would, an it seem thee right,
 Thou shouldst say why thy foeman threaten, why they seek thee with war-like might!
 Thou hast here many gallant heroes, it grieveth me sore to see
 Thy land thus with hate o'erladen, for woe must it bring to thee.'
 'Wouldst thou know? Then, Sir Knight, I will tell thee—A knight did me service true,
 And the fruit of all manly virtue his life as its decking knew,
 And gallant and wise was the hero, and his faith as a goodly tree
 Was fast-rooted, and none so courteous but were shamed by his courtesy.
 And modest was he as a woman, tho' dauntless and strong, I trow,
 And a knight e'en as he free-handed ere his day never land might know.
 (But they that shall come hereafter, other folk shall their doings see.)
 A fool was he in false dealing, and a Moor, as myself shall be;
 And his father's name was Tánkaneis, a king of a kingly heart,
 And his son, he who was my lover, men knew him as Eisenhart.
 That for love's sake I took his service, as a woman I did not well,
 It hath brought me but lasting sorrow since no joy to his portion fell,
 They deem I to death betrayed him! Yet such treason were far from me,
 Tho' his folk bring such charge against me; and dear to my heart was he,
 Far dearer than *they* e'er held him. Nor witnesses here shall fail
 To speak to the truth of my saying, if it please them to tell the tale.
 His gods and mine, they know it, the truth—I must sorrow deep
 Since my womanly shame hath brought him a guerdon I needs must weep!
 'Thus he won in my maiden service much honour by knighthood fair,
 I thought thus to prove my lover; his deeds did his worth declare.
 For my sake he put off his harness (that which like to a hall doth stand
 Is a lofty tent, the Scotch folk they brought it into this land),
 Then e'en tho' he bare no armour his body he little spared,
 For he held his life as worthless, many ventures unarmed he dared.
 As the matter so stood between us, a prince who my man should be,

Prothizilas did men call him, a bold knight, from all cowardice free,
Rode forth in search of venture, and evil for him that day
For there, in Assagog's forest, his death in waiting lay.
In a knightly joust he met it, and there too he found his end
The gallant knight who faced him—'Twas Prince Eisenhart my friend.
For both of the twain were piercèd with a spear thro' heart and shield,
And I, alas! poor woman, must weep for that fatal field.
And ever their death doth grieve me, and sorrow from love shall grow,
And never henceforth as my husband a man do I think to know.'
Then e'en tho' she was a heathen Gamuret he bethought him well,
That a heart more true and tender ne'er in woman's breast might dwell.
Her purity was her baptism, and as water that washed her o'er
Was the rain that streamed from her eyelids o'er her breast, and the robe she wore;
All her joy did she find in sorrow, and grief o'er her life did reign—
Then the queen she looked on the hero, and in this wise she spake again:
'With his army the king of Scotland hath sought me across the sea,
For the knight was son to his uncle; yet no ill can he do to me,
If here the truth be spoken, that is worse than the grief I knew
For Eisenhart's death!' and sorely she sighed that lady true;
And many a glance thro' her tear-drops on Gamuret shyly fell,
And her eyes to her heart gave counsel, and his beauty it pleased her well,
(And she knew how to judge a fair face, since fair heathen she oft had seen,)
And the root of true love and longing it sprang up the twain between.
She looked upon him, and his glances, they answering sought her own—
Then she bade them to fill the wine-cup, had she dared, it were left undone,
And she grieved she might not delay it, since to many a hero brave
Who spake with the maids this wine-cup the signal of parting gave.
Yet her body was e'en as his body, and his look did such courage give
To the maid, that she thought henceforward in the life of the knight to live.
Then he stood upright, and he spake thus, 'Lady, I weary thee,
Too long methinks do I sit here, I were lacking in courtesy!
As befitting true knight and servant I mourn for thy woe so great,
Lady, do thou command me, I will on thy bidding wait.
Wherever thou wilt, there I wend me. I will serve thee in all I may!'
And the lady she quoth in answer, 'I believe thee, Sir Knight, alway!'
Then his kindly host the Burg-grave, of his labour would nothing spare
Lest the hours of his stay be heavy; and he asked if he forth would fare,
And ride round the walls of the city? 'The battle-field shalt thou see,
And how we would guard our portals!' then Gamuret courteously
Made answer, he fain would see it, the field where they late had fought,
And the place where brave deeds of knighthood had by gallant hands been wrought.
And noble knights rode with him adown from the palace hall,
Some were wise, some were young and foolish,—So rode they around the wall
To sixteen gates, and they told him not one of them might they close
Since Eisenhart's death called for vengeance—'So wrathful shall be our foes
Our conflict it resteth never, but we fight both by night and day,
Nor our portals since then we fasten, but open they stand alway.
At eight of our gates they beset us, true Eisenhart's gallant knights,
And evil shall they have wrought us; spurred by anger each man doth fight,
The princes of lofty lineage, the king of Assagog's ban!'
And there floated before each portal a banner, so pale and wan,
With a piercèd knight upon it. When Eisenhart lost his life
His folk chose to them this symbol, as badge in the coming strife.
'But against these arms have we others, wherewith we their grief would still,
And thus shalt thou know our banner; 'twas wrought at our lady's will,

Two fingers in oath she stretcheth, that never such grief she knew
 As Eisenhart's death hath brought her (true sorrow for heart so true),
 And so doth it stand the semblance of our queen, on a samite white
 Belakané in sable fashioned,—Since against us they came in might,
 (To avenge him for whom she sorrows) so she looks from our portals high.
 And proud Friedebrand's mighty army doth to eight of our gates stand nigh,
 Baptized men, from o'er the waters. A prince doth each portal hold,
 And forth from the gate he sallies, with his banners and warriors bold.
 'From the host of Gaschier the Norman, a count have we captive ta'en,
 And heavy methinks the ransom we may hope from that knight to gain;
 He is sister's son to Kaillet, and the harm *he* to us hath done
 His nephew I ween shall pay for! Yet such prize have we seldom won.
 Here have we no grassy meadow, but sand, thirty gallops wide
 Betwixt the tents and the trenches; here many a joust we ride.
 And further his host would tell him, 'One knight, he doth never fail
 To ride forth, a fair joust seeking. (If his service shall nought avail
 With her who hath sent him hither, what boots it how well he fight?)
 Proud Heuteger is the hero, of him may I speak with right
 For since our besiegers threaten there dawneth never a day
 But before the gates 'neath the castle, that knight doth his charger stay.
 And oft from that dauntless hero many tokens we needs must bear,
 That he smote through our shields at his spear-point, and costly their worth and rare
 When the squire from the shield doth break them. Many knights 'fore his joust must fall;
 He would that all men may behold him, and our women they praise him all.
 And he who is praised of women, one knoweth that he doth hold
 The prize in his hand, and his heart's joy in full measure shall aye be told!
 But now would the sun, grown weary, its wandering rays recall;
 'Twas time that the ride was ended—Then he sought with his host the hall,
 And the evening meal was ready; and I needs of that feast must tell,
 'Twas laid in a fitting order, and knightly 'twas served, and well.
 And the queen with mien so stately she unto his table came,
 (Here stood the fish, there the heron) and she counted it not for shame
 To ride adown from her palace, that herself she might be aware
 If they cared for the guest as 'twas fitting, and with her rode her maidens fair.
 Low she knelt (and but ill it pleased him) and cut as it seemed her best
 For the knight a fitting portion; she was glad in her goodly guest.
 And she filled for him the wine-cup, and care for his needs would take,
 And well did he mark, the hero, her mien, and the words she spake.
 And his fiddlers sat at the table, and over against the knight
 Was his chaplain: with shy looks shamefast, he spake to the lady bright:
 'I looked not to find such welcome as, Lady, thou gavest me,
 Too much must I deem the honour! If rede I might give to thee,
 Then to-day I had claimed naught from thee save was due to my worth alone,
 Nor adown the hill hadst thou ridden, nor such service to me hadst shown.
 And, Lady, if I may venture to make unto thee request,
 Let me live but as best befits me, thou dost honour o'ermuch thy guest!
 Yet her kindly care she stayed not; for she stept to his page's seat
 And with gentle words and friendly she prayed them to freely eat,
 This she did her guest to honour: and the noble lads, I trow,
 Bare goodwill to the royal lady. Nor the queen methinks was slow
 To pass where the host was seated and his lady, the Burg-gravine,
 And she raised the golden goblet, and she spake as should fit a queen:
 'Now unto your care I give him, our guest, and I rede ye both
 Since the honour is yours, to hearken, and do my will nothing loth!
 And she bade them farewell, and she turned her, and passed to her guest once more,

Whose heart for her sake was heavy; and such sorrow for him she bore,
And her heart and her eyes they answered, and they spake to her sorrow yea!
And courteous she spake, the lady, 'Sir Knight, thou the word shalt say,
And whate'er be thy will, I will do it, for I hold thee a worthy guest.
Now give me, I pray, dismissal; if here thou in peace shalt rest,
Of that shall we all be joyful.' Her torch-holders were of gold,
And four tapers they bare before her, so she rode to her fortress-hold.
Nor long at the board they lingered—The hero was sad, and gay,
He was glad for the honour done him, yet a sorrow upon him lay,
And that was strong Love's compelling, that a proud heart and courage high
Can bend to her will, and gladness shall oft at her bidding fly.
Then the hostess she passed to her chamber, yea, e'en as the meal was o'er;
And a couch did they spread for the hero, and love to the labour bore.
And the host to his guest spake kindly, 'Now here shall thy sleep be sweet,
Thou shalt rest thro' the night that cometh, to thy need shall such rest be meet.'
Then he spake to his men, and he bade them they should hence from the hall away,
And the noble youths his pages, their couches around his lay
Each one with the head toward his master, for so was the custom good;
And tapers so tall and flaming alight round the chamber stood.
Yet ill did it please the hero that so long were the hours of night,
For the Moorish queen so dusky, had vanquished his heart of might.
And he turned as a willow wand bendeth, till his joints they were heard to crack,
The strife and the love that he craved for he deemed he o'er-long did lack.
And his heart-beats they echoed loudly, as it swelled high for knighthood fain,
And he stretched himself as an archer who bendeth a bow amain.
And so eager his lust for battle that sleepless the hero lay
Till he saw the grey light of morning, though as yet it should scarce be day.
And his chaplain for Mass was ready, and to God and the knight they sing,
For so did he give commandment. Then he bade them his harness bring,
And he rode where a joust should wait him, and that self-same hour would ride
A horse that could charge the foeman, and turn swiftly to either side,
And answer to bit and bridle if its rider would backward draw.
And the watchers, both man and woman, his helm in the gateway saw,
And the anchor shone fair upon it; and no man ere this might see
So wondrous fair a hero, for like to a god was he!
And strong spears they bare for his using—How then was he decked, the knight?
With iron was his charger covered, as should serve for a shield in fight,
And above lay another covering, nor heavy methinks it weighed,
'Twas a samite green; and his surcoat and blazoned coat were made
Of Achmardi, green to look on, and in Araby fashioned fair,
And no lie I tell, but the shield-thongs that the weight of the shield should bear
Were of silk and gold untarnished, and jewel-bedecked their pride,
And the boss of the shield was covered with red gold, in the furnace tried.
He served but for love's rewarding; sharp conflict he held it light;
And the queen she looked from her window, with many a lady bright.
And see, there Heuteger held him, who the prize ne'er had failed to gain;
When he saw the knight draw nearer, in swift gallop across the plain,
He thought, 'Now whence came this Frenchman? Who hither this knight hath sent?
If a *Moor* I had thought this hero, my wit were to madness bent!'
No whit they delayed the onslaught, from gallop to swifter flight
Each man spurred amain his charger; and as fitting a valiant knight
Nor one would evade the other, but would meet him in jousting fair,
From brave Heuteger's spear the splinters flew high thro' the summer air,
But his foeman so well withstood him that he thrust him from off his steed
Adown on the grass; but seldom might he win for his joust such meed!

And his foe in his course rode o'er him, and trode him unto the ground,
 Yet he sprang up again, and valiant, fresh lust for the strife he found,
 But Gamuret's lance had pierced him thro' the arm, and he bade him yield,
 And he knew he had found his master, and he spake from the foughten field,
 'Now who shall have o'erthrown me?' and the victor he swiftly spake,
 'Gamuret Angevin do men call me!' then he quoth, 'Thou my pledge canst take!'
 Then his pledge the knight took, and straightway he sent him within the wall,
 And much praise did he win from the women who looked from the castle hall.
 And swiftly there came towards him, Gaschier of Normandy,
 A proud and wealthy hero and mighty in strife was he.
 And Gamuret made him ready, for a second joust he'd ride,
 And strong and new was his spear-shaft, and the iron was both sharp and wide,
 And the strangers they faced each other—But unequal their lot, I trow,
 For Gaschier and his gallant charger full swiftly were they laid low,
 And the knight with his arms and harness he fell in the shock of strife;
 If he thought it for good or for evil, by his pledge must he win his life.
 Then Gamuret quoth, the hero, 'Thou hast pledged unto me thine hand,
 Yet the weapon it well hath wielded! Ride thou to the Scottish band,
 And bid them to cease from troubling; if they to thy will are fain,
 Thou canst follow me to the city.' Then the knight hied him o'er the plain.
 If he prayed them, or gave commandment, they did at the last his will,
 And the Scottish host they rested, and from conflict they held them still.
 Then Kaillet spurred swift towards him, but Gamuret turned his rein,
 His cousin he was, and near kinsman, why then bring him grief and pain?
 And the Spaniard cried loudly on him; on his helm he an ostrich bare,
 And so far as I know to tell ye the knight he was decked so fair
 With silken raiment goodly, and long were his robes and wide,
 And the plain rang clear with the chiming of sweet bells as he o'er it hied.
 The flower he of manly beauty, and his fairness it held the field,
 Save for two who should come hereafter, and his fame unto theirs must yield;
 But Parzival and brave Beaucorps, King Lot's son, they are not here,
 Not yet were they born, but hereafter for their beauty men held them dear!
 Then Gaschier he grasped his bridle. 'Now checked will it be thy race,
 So I tell thee upon mine honour, if the Angevin thou shalt face
 Who there my pledge hath taken. Sir Knight, thou shalt list my prayer
 And hearken unto my counsel; in Gamuret's hand I swear
 From strife aside to turn thee: stay thy steed then for my sake,
 For mighty is he in conflict!' Then aloud King Kaillet spake,
 'Is he Gamuret my cousin, and son unto King Gandein?
 Then I care not with him to battle, no foe shall he be of mine!
 Take thine hand from off my bridle'—'Nay, further thou shalt not fare
 Till mine eyes have first beheld thee, with thine head of the helmet bare,
 For *mine* with blows is deafened!' Then his helmet the prince unbound.
 And yet, tho' with him he fought not, Gamuret other foemen found.
 And the day had grown to high morning—And the folk who the joust might see
 Were glad at heart, and they gat them to their bulwarks right speedily,
 For he was as a net before them, and none might escape his hold.
 And he chose him another charger, so the tale unto me was told,
 And it flew, and the earth it spurnèd, and its work could aright fulfil,
 Bold when the knight would battle, yet its speed could he check at will.
 And what would he do the rider? His valour I praise alway,
 For he rode where the Moorish army to the west by the sea-coast lay.
 Thence a prince, Rassalig men called him, forgat not each coming morn
 (He was Assagog's richest hero, to riches and honour born
 Since he came of a royal lineage) to take from the camp his way

He would fain joust before the city—But his strength it was quelled that day
By Anjou's dauntless hero; and a dusky maid made moan
(Since 'twas she who sent him hither) that her knight should be thus o'erthrown.
For a squire brought, without his bidding, to his master, brave Gamuret,
A spear, with light reed-shaft fashioned, and its point 'gainst the Moor he set,
And with it he smote the paynim from his steed down upon the sand,
Nor longer he bade him lie there than as surety he pledged his hand.
So the strife it had found its ending, and the hero had won him fame;
Then Gamuret saw eight banners toward the city that onward came,
And he bade the conquered hero the force with his word to stay,
And follow him to the city. And that word must he needs obey.
Nor Gaschier delayed his coming; and unto the Burg-grave told
How his guest sought for further conflict nor his wrath might the host withhold.
If he swallowed not iron as an ostrich, nor his wrath did on stones assuage
'Twas but that he might not find them! Then he gnashed his teeth for rage,
And he growled as a mighty lion, and the hair of his head he tare,
And he quoth, 'So the years of my lifetime a harvest of folly bear,
The gods they had sent to my keeping a valiant and worthy friend,
If with strife he shall be o'erladen, then mine honour hath found an end;
Sword and shield they shall little profit—Yea, shame he would on me cast
Who should bring this to my remembrance!' Then swift from his place he passed,
And he gat him into the portal, and a squire towards him drew,
And he bare a shield that was painted with a knight by a spear pierced thro',
In Eisenhart's land was it fashioned; and a helmet his hand must hold,
And a sword that Rassalig carried in battle, that heathen bold,
But now was he parted from it whose fame was in every place;
Were he slain unbaptized I think me, God had shown to this hero grace!
And e'en as the Burg-grave saw it, ne'er of yore was his joy so great,
For the coat-of-arms he knew it—So he rode thro' the city gate,
And without, his guest had halted, young hero he, not yet old,
As one of a joust desirous, and his bridle the Burg-grave bold,
Lahfilirost was his name, he grasped it, and he led him within the wall;
And I wot well no other foeman that day 'neath his spear must fall.
Quoth Lahfilirost the Burg-grave, 'Sir Knight, thou shalt tell to me
If thine hand Rassalig hath vanquished?' 'Then our land from all strife is free;
For he of the Moors is chieftain, the men of true Eisenhart
Who have brought unto us such sorrow—But now shall our woe depart,
'Twas a wrathful god who bade him thus seek us with all his host,
But his weapons to naught are smitten, and to folly is turned his boast!'
Then he led him in (ill it pleased him) and there met then the royal maid,
And she loosened the bands of his vizor, and her hand on his bridle laid,
To her care must the Burg-grave yield it: nor his squires to their task were slack,
For they turned them about, and swiftly they rode on their master's track.
So men saw the queen so gracious lead her guest thro' the city street
Who here should be hailed the victor—Then she lighted her on her feet,
'Ah me! but thy squires are faithful! Fear ye lest your lord be lost?
Without ye shall he be cared for; take his steed, here am I his host!'
And above found he many a maiden: then her hands of dusky hue
The queen set unto his harness, and disarmed the knight so true.
And the bed-covering was of sable, and the couch it was spread so fair,
And in secret a hidden honour they did for the knight prepare,
For no one was there to witness—The maidens they might not stay,
And the door was fast closed behind them, and Frau Minne might have her way.
So the queen in the arms of her true love found guerdon of sweet delight,
Tho' unlike were the twain in their colour, Moorish princess and Christian knight!

Then the townsfolk brought many an offering to the gods who had seen their woe.
 That which Rassalig needs must promise ere he from the field might go
 That he did, in all truth and honour, yet heavy was he at heart,
 And afresh sprang the fount of his sorrow for his prince gallant Eisenhart.
 And the Burg-grave he heard of his coming; then loud rang the trumpet call,
 And no man of Zassamank's princes but came to the palace hall.
 They gave Gamuret thanks for the honour he had won in the field that day,
 Four-and-twenty had fallen before him, and their chargers he bore away,
 And three chieftains had he made captive. And there rode in the princes' train
 Many gallant knights, in the courtyard of the palace did they draw rein.
 And the hero had slept and eaten, and clad him in raiment fair,
 Chief host was he, for his body fit garments would they prepare.
 And she who afore was a maiden but now was a wife would take
 Her lord by the hand, forth she led him, and unto her princes spake:
 'My body and this my kingdom are vassals unto this knight,
 If so be that his foemen fearing, resist not his hand of might!'
 Then Gamuret spake, and his bidding was courteous, for hero meet,
 Sir Rassalig, go thou nearer, with a kiss thou my wife shalt greet;
 And Sir Gaschier, thou shalt do likewise.' Then the Scotch knight proud Heuteger
 He bade on the lips to kiss her (and the wounds won in joust he bare).
 Then he bade them all be seated, and standing, he wisely spake:
 'I were fain to behold my kinsman, if he who did captive take
 The knight shall have naught against it—As kinsman it seemeth me
 That I find here no other counsel save straightway to set him free!'
 Then the queen she smiled, and bade them go swiftly and seek the knight,
 And then thro' the throng he pressed him, that count so fair and bright,
 Yet bare he the wounds of knighthood, and bravely and well had fought;
 With the host of Gaschier the Norman the land of the Moors he sought.
 He was courteous; his sire a Frenchman he was Kaillet's sister's son,
 Killirjacac his name; in the service of fair women fair meed he won,
 And the fairest of men they deemed him. When Gamuret saw his face
 (For like were they each to the other, as men of a kindred race)
 He bade his queen to kiss him and embrace him as kinsman true,
 And he spake, 'Now come thou and greet me!' and the knight to his arms he drew,
 And he kissed him, and each was joyful that the other he here might meet:
 And Gamuret quoth unto him, 'Alas! cousin fair and sweet,
 What doth thy young strength in this conflict? Say, if woman hath sent thee here?'
 'Nay, never a woman sent me, with my cousin I came, Gaschier,
 He knoweth why he hath brought me—A thousand men have I,
 And I do to him loyal service—To Rouen in Normandy
 I came, where his force was gathered, and many a youthful knight
 I brought from Champagne in mine army; 'neath his banner we fain would fight.
 Now evil hath turned against him what of cunning is hers and skill,
 Thou wilt honour thyself if thou free him for my sake, and cure his ill!'
 'Thyself shalt fulfil thy counsel! Go thou, take with thee Gaschier,
 I would fain see my kinsman Kaillet, do thou bring him unto me here!'
 So they wrought out the host's desiring, and brought him at his behest,
 And in loving wise and kindly did Gamuret greet his guest;
 And oft-times the queen embraced him, and kissed him with kisses sweet:
 And nothing it wronged her honour in such wise the prince to greet,
 He was cousin unto her husband, by birth was himself a king.
 Then smiling his host spake to him, 'God knows, 'twere an evil thing,
 Had I taken from thee Toledo, and thy goodly land of Spain
 For Gascony's king, who wrathful doth plague thee with strife amain;
 'Twere faithless of me, Sir Kaillet, since mine aunt's son thou sure shalt be;

The bravest of knights shall be with thee; say, who forced this strife on thee?
 Then out spake the proud young hero, 'My cousin Schiltung bade
 (Since his daughter Friedebrand wedded) that I lend to the king mine aid.
 For the sake of his wife hath he won him, yea even from me alone
 Six thousand chosen heroes, who valour and skill have shown.
 And other men did I bring him, but a part they shall hence have sailed,
 For the Scottish folk came they hither, brave bands who in strife ne'er failed.
 And there came to his aid from Greenland, strong heroes who bravely fought,
 Two mighty kings, and a torrent of knighthood with them they brought,
 And many a goodly vessel: and they pleased me, those men of might—
 And here for his sake came Morhold, who hath cunning and skill in fight.'
 'But now have they turned them homewards, and that which the queen shall say
 Even that will I do with mine army, her servant am I alway!
 Thou shalt thank me not for this service, from kinsman 'twas due, I ween.
 Now *thine* are these gallant heroes, if like mine they baptized had been
 And were even as they in colour, then never a monarch crowned
 But if they should fight against him, of conflict his fill had found!
 But I marvel what here hath brought thee? Say, how didst thou reach this strand?'
 'Yestreen I came, and this morning I am lord o'er this goodly land!
 The queen by the hand she took me, and with love I myself would shield,
 For so did my wit give counsel—' 'Yea, so hast thou won the field,
 Those sweet weapons two hosts have vanquished!' 'Thou wouldst say, since I fled from *thee*,
 So loudly on me thou calledst, say, what wouldst thou force from me?
 Let us speak of the thing in friendship!' 'Thine anchor I failed to know,
 But seldom mine aunt's brave husband Gandein, did such token show!'
 'But I, I knew well thine ostrich with the snake's head upon thy breast,
 Aloft stood thy bird so stately, nor hid it within a nest!'
 'And I saw in thy mien and bearing that that pledge would have 'seemed thee ill
 Which two heroes afore had given, tho' first had they fought their fill.'
 'E'en such fate as theirs were my portion—But this thing I needs must say,
 Tho' little I like a devil, were he victor as thou this day
 For love of his gallant doings the women had deemed him sweet,
 Yea, as sugar were fain to eat him!' 'Now thou praisest me more than meet!'
 'Nay, of flattery know I little, thou shalt see that I hold thee dear
 In other wise!' Then the hero bade Rassalig draw anear.
 And courteous he spake, King Kailat, 'My kinsman with valiant hand
 Hath made of thee here his captive?' 'Yea, Sire, so the thing doth stand,
 And I hold him for such a hero that Assagog's kingdom fair
 Should fail not to yield him homage, since the crown he may never wear,
 Our prince Eisenhart! In her service was he slain who shall now be wife
 To thy kinsman, as knight so faithful he gave for her love his life.
 With my kiss have I sealed forgiveness, yet my lord and my friend I lost!
 If thy cousin by knightly dealing will repay of his death the cost
 I will fold my hands as his vassal: and wealth shall be his and fame,
 All that Eisenhart from Tánkaneis as his heritage thought to claim.
 Embalmed here the hero lieth, and I gaze on his wounds each day
 Since this spear thro' his true heart piercing, my lord and my king did slay!'
 Then he drew it forth from his bosom by a silken cord so fine,
 And the heroes saw the spear-blade 'neath his robe on his bare chest shine.
 And he quoth, 'It is now high morning, if my lord Sir Killirjacac
 My token will bear to my princes, with him will the knights ride back.'
 And a finger-ring he sent them: dark as hell were those heroes all
 And they rode who were there of princes, thro' the town to the castle hall.
 As his vassals he gave with their banners to Assagog's lords their land,
 And each one rejoiced in the fiefdom he won from his ruler's hand,

But the better part was his portion, Gamuret's, as their lord and king.
 And these were the first—as they passed hence their homage they fain would bring
 The princes of Zassamank's kingdom, and they came in their order due,
 And each as their queen had bade them, they took from his hand anew
 Their land, and the fruit it should bear them, as to each man was fit and right,
 And poverty fled from his presence. Now he who was slain in fight
 And in life was a prince by lineage, Prothizilas, he had left
 A Dukedom fair, and this country which was thus of its lord bereft
 He gave unto him who much honour had won by his strong right hand,
 The Burg-grave, in combat dauntless—With its banners he took the land.
 Then Assagog's noble princes took the Scotch Duke, proud Heuteger,
 And Gaschier, the Norman hero, to their lord did they lead them there,
 And he spake them free for their asking, and they thanked brave Gamuret.
 Then Heuteger of Scotland with prayers did these knights beset,
 'Now give to our lord the armour, as prize for his deeds so brave,
 That Eisenhart's life took from us, when to Friedebrand he gave
 That which was of our land the glory—Forfeit of joy the knight,
 And dead on his bier he lieth, since no love might his love requite—'
 And earth knoweth naught so goodly, the helm it was strong and hard,
 Yea even of diamond fashioned, in battle a goodly guard.
 Then Heuteger sware unto them, if the land of his lord he saw
 He would pray of his hand the armour, and send it to them once more.
 And this did he swear them freely—Then leave would the princes pray
 Who stood in the royal presence, and they wend from the hall their way.
 And tho' sorely the land was wasted, yet Gamuret scattered free
 Such royal gifts and goodly as if laden with gold each tree.
 And costly I ween the presents that vassal and friend must share
 From the open hand of the hero; and the queen deemed it right and fair.
 Full many a bitter conflict had been fought ere the bridal feast,
 But peace had the foeman sealèd, and the land was from strife released;
 (Nor this song I myself have woven, but so was it told to me)
 And Eisenhart did they bury with honours right royally.
 To his grave did his kinsmen bear him, and the gold that his lands might bring
 In a whole year long, did they spend there, of their free will they did this thing.
 And Gamuret bade his kinsfolk his riches and lands to hold
 And use as they would; tho' they craved not such boon from the hero bold.
 At dawn from before the fortress the foe would their camp withdraw,
 And those who were there departed; many litters with them they bore.
 And the field was left unsheltered, save for one tent so great and fair,
 And the king he bade his servants that tent to his vessel bear.
 And he said to his folk that to Assagog would he take it, and yet I wot
 He did with that speech deceive them, for Assagog saw him not.
 Now that proud and gallant hero, his heart gave him little rest
 Since he found there no deeds of knighthood, and gladness forsook his breast;
 Yet his dusky wife was dearer than e'en his own life might be,
 Ne'er knew he a truer lady whose heart was from falsehood free,
 She forgot not what 'seemed a woman, and with her as comrades good
 Went purity untarnished, and the ways of true womanhood.
 He was born in Seville's fair city whom the knight would hereafter pray,
 When he grew of his sojourn weary, to sail with him far away;
 For many a mile had he led him, and he brought him unto this place,
 And a Christian was he, the steersman, nor like to a Moor in face.
 And wisely he spake, 'Thou shalt hide it from them who a dark skin bear,
 Too swift is my barque for pursuing, from hence shall we quickly fare!'

Then his gold it was borne to the vessel. Now of parting I needs must tell,
 By night did he go, the hero, and his purpose he hid it well;
 But when from his wife he sailèd, in her womb did she bear his child:
 And fair blew the wind, and the breezes bare him hence o'er the waters wild.
 And the lady she found a letter, and 'twas writ by her husband's hand;
 And in French (for she well could read it) did the words of the writing stand:
 'Here one love to another speaketh—As a thief have I stolen away
 That mine eyes might not see thy sorrow—But this thing I needs must say,
 Wert thou, e'en as I, a Christian I ever should weep for thee,
 For e'en now I must sorely mourn thee. If it chance that our child shall be
 In face like unto one other, then his is a dowry fair,
 Of Anjou was *he* born, and Frau Minne for his lady he did declare.
 Yet was he in strife a hailstorm, ill neighbour unto his foe;
 That his grandsire hath been King Gandein, this I will that my son shall know.
 Dead he lay thro' his deeds of knighthood; and his father the same death won,
 Addanz was his name, and unsplintered his shield hath been seen of none;
 And by birth he hath been a Breton, and two brothers' sons were they,
 He and the brave Pendragon, and their sires' names I here will say;
 For Lassalies he hath been the elder, and Brickus was his brother's name,
 And Mazadan was their father whom a fay for her love did claim.
 Terre-de-la-schoie did they call her, to Fay-Morgan she led the king,
 For he was her true heart's fetters; and my race from those twain did spring.
 And fair shall they be, and valiant, and as crownèd kings they reign—
 If lady, thou'lt be baptized thou mayst win me to thee again!
 Yet had she no thought of anger, but she spake, 'Ah! too soon 'tis o'er,
 Of a sooth would I do his bidding, would it bring him to me once more.
 In whose charge hath my courteous hero left the fruit of his love so true?
 Alas! for the sweet communion that we twain for a short space knew!
 Shall the strength of my bitter sorrow rule body and soul away?
 And she quoth, 'Now his God to honour, his will would I fain obey,
 And gladly I'd be baptized, and live as should please my love!
 And sorrow with her heart struggled, and e'en as the turtle dove
 Her joy sought the withered branches, for the same mind was hers, I ween,
 When the mate of the turtle dieth, she forsaketh the branches green.
 Then the queen at the time appointed bare a son, who was dark and light,
 For in him had God wrought a wonder, at one while was he black and white.
 And a thousand times she kissed him where white as his sire's his skin.
 And she named the babe of her sorrows Feirefis Angevin.
 And he was a woodland-waster, many spears did he shatter fair,
 And shields did he pierce—as a magpie the hue of his face and hair.
 Now a year and more was ended since Gamuret won such fame
 At Zassamank, and his right hand the victor's prize might claim,
 And yet o'er the seas he drifted, for the winds vexed the hero bold.
 Then a silken sail red gleaming he saw, and the barque did hold
 The men whom the King of Scotland, Friedebrand, sent upon their way
 At the bidding of Queen Belakané: from her would they pardon pray
 That ever he came against her, tho' in sooth he had lost the more.
 And with them the diamond helmet, the corslet and sword they bore,
 And hosen e'en such as the harness, and a marvel it needs must be
 That the barque was thus borne towards him, as the venture hath told to me!
 And they gave him the goodly armour, and an oath unto them he swore
 That his mouth it should speak their message, an he came to the queen once more.
 And they parted; and one hath told me that the sea bare him onward bound
 Till he came to a goodly haven, and in Seville his goal he found.
 And with gold did he pay his steersman right well for his guidance true,

And they parted, those twain, and sorrow the heart of that steersman knew!

BOOK II HERZELEIDE

Now there in the Spanish country he thought him the king to greet,
 His kinsman and cousin Kaillet, and he followed with footsteps fleet
 To Toledo, but thence had he ridden unto deeds of knighthood fair,
 Where many a spear should be splintered, and men thought not their shields to spare.
 Then he thought him to make him ready (so the venture doth tell I ween)
 With many a blazoned spear-shaft, and many a sendal green;
 For each spear it bare a pennon, with the anchor in ermine white,
 And well was it wrought, the symbol, and costly in all men's sight.
 And long and broad were the pennons, and e'en to the hand hung low
 When men on the spear-blade bound them, a span-breadth the point below.
 And a hundred spears were ready for that true and gallant knight,
 And his cousin's folk they bare them, and with him went forth to fight;
 And honour and loyal service they showed him as fit and fair,
 Nor I think had their lord been wrathful that his kinsman their love should share.
 I know not how long he sought him, till shelter at length he found
 In the Waleis land: 'fore Kanvoleis were pitched on the open ground
 Many tents so fair and knightly; (I speak not from fancy light
 But sooth are the words I tell ye if the tale ye would hear aright)
 Then he bade his folk to halt there, and he sent on before his face
 The chief of his squires, and he bade him to seek them a resting-place.
 He would fain do his master's bidding, and swift to the town he sped,
 And many a pack-horse laden his comrades behind him led.
 And never a house he saw there but its roof was a shield I trow,
 And the walls were hung and circled with spears in a goodly row,
 For the queen of the Waleis country had ordered at Kanvoleis
 That a Tourney fair be holden, and they ordered it in such wise
 That a coward had little liked it—for whoever would seek such strife
 At his will doth it chance but seldom! She was maiden, not yet a wife,
 And herself and two lands she offered to him who the prize should hold;
 And many to earth had fallen in whose ear had this tale been told,
 And he who such fall must suffer he held that his chance was o'er.
 And many a dauntless hero showed knighthood those walls before,
 And many a horse rushed onward as the knight spurred to onslaught fierce,
 And the sword-blades rang clear on each other, and spears did the shield rims pierce.
 A bridge from the plain was builded that crossed o'er the river's flow,
 And 'twas closed by a tower-portal; nor the squire at his task was slow,
 But he opened the gates, unwearied, when one would an entrance win.
 And above it there stood the palace, and the queen sat the hall within,
 And she gazed from the high hall window with many a maiden fair,
 And they looked on the squires beneath them to see what had brought them there.
 'Twixt themselves had they taken counsel, and a tent did they rear on high
 For the winning of love ungranted a king wrought it in days gone by,
 ('Twas in service of Queen Belakané). The squires laboured with might and main
 Till the burden of thirty pack-steeds they raised on the grassy plain,
 A pavilion rich to look on, and the meadow it was so wide
 That the silken ropes that held it might stretch forth on either side.
 And Gamuret, their master, ate without in the open air—
 And then for his courtly entrance with skill would the knight prepare,
 Nor longer might be delaying—His squires take the spears straightway,
 And they bind them fast together, and five in each band they lay,
 And the sixth in their hand they carry, with its pennon and anchor white;
 So proudly into the city came riding this gallant knight.

Then the queen she heard the tidings that a noble guest was come
 From a far-off land and distant, and in sooth was he known to none.
 'And courteous his folk in bearing; both heathen and French I trow,
 And Angevin, some among them if their speech I aright may know;
 And their courage is high, and their raiment both rich and well shaped shall be.
 But now was I with his people, and they seem me from falsehood free,
 And they say, 'Who hath lust for riches, if he to our lord shall seek
 He will free him from fear of scarceness!' The while I with them did speak,
 I asked them to tell of their master, and they thought not to hide the thing,
 But spake of a true heart freely, 'Of Zassamank is he king.'
 'Twas a page who brought the tidings—'Ah me! that pavilion fair!
 Wouldst thou pledge thy crown and thy kingdom not half of its cost were there!'
 'Thou needst not to praise so highly, my mouth ne'er shall say thee nay,
 A rich man shall be its owner, no lack doth he know alway.'
 And in this wise she spake, the lady, the fair and gracious queen,
 'Why cometh he not to the castle? For fain I his face had seen.'
 This she bade her page to ask him—Then the hero was fain to make
 Brave entry into the city, and the sleepers must needs awake.
 Many shields he saw fair shining—The blast of the trumpets clear
 Rang loud and long before him, and two drummers ye needs must hear
 As they tossed and smote their tambours, and the walls echoed back the sound,
 With the notes of the flutes 'twas mingled as the train through the city wound,
 'Twas a march that they played so gaily—Nor forget we how he must ride
 Their master and lord, he followed with the fiddlers his rein beside.
 Then he threw his leg o'er his charger, that hero so bold and fair,
 And boots did he wear of leather, or else had his limbs been bare.
 And his mouth it was e'en as a ruby, and red, as a fire doth burn,
 And full, not too thin; fair his body wherever the eye might turn;
 And fair was his hair and curling, and wherever one saw the skin
 I ween 'twas as costly cover as ever a head might win.
 And of samite green was his mantle, and the sable shone dark thereon
 Tho' white was his vest, and the gazers they came in a goodly throng.
 And many must ask the question, 'Who was he, the beardless knight
 Who rode with such pomp of riches?' Then the tale it was spread aright,
 For they spake it as truth who knew it—So they drew to the bridge anear
 The folk of the town, and his people; and so bright was the radiance clear
 That shone from the queen that it thrilled him thro' his strong limbs, that goodly knight,
 And he braced himself as a falcon that plumeth its wings for flight,
 And the lodging he deemed it goodly; so thought he that hero wise;
 And his hostess with joy beheld him, the lady of fair Wales!
 Then the king of Spain he heard it, how there stood on the open plain
 The tent that at Rassalig's bidding Gamuret as his prize did gain
 At Patelamunt, and the tidings a knight to his lord would bring—
 Then he sped as a deer, joy's vassal I ween was the gallant king!
 And thus spake the knight, 'Thy kinsman, and the son of thine aunt I saw,
 And with pomp and in state as aforetime, so to-day doth he hither draw;
 There are floating a hundred pennons full fair by his knightly shield,
 And around his high pavilion they stand on the grassy field,
 And green as the grass the pennons, and the hero bold doth bear
 Three anchors of snow-white ermine on every sendal fair.'
 'Hath he come here arrayed for battle? Ah! then shall men see straightway
 How he spurreth him swift to the onslaught, how he striveth in knightly fray!
 Long time hath the proud King Hardeiss his anger against me shown,
 Here in joust shall Gamuret fell him, and good fortune shall be mine own!'
 Then straightway he sent a message to Gaschier, the Norman knight,

Where he lay with many a vassal; and Killirjacac the fair and bright,
 For here had they come at his bidding—The twain at King Kailet's side
 Towards the fair pavilion with a goodly following hied.
 And Zassamank's king was joyful, for he held them dear at heart:
 And the time over-long had seemed them since they must from each other part,
 This they spake of a true heart truly—And the king he was fain to know
 What knights should be here for the Tourney, who valour and skill should show.
 Then spake unto him his kinsmen, 'From distant lands they came,
 The knights whom love's power hath brought here, many heroes of dauntless fame.'
 'Here Uther Pendragon fighteth, and with him his Breton host;
 One grief as a thorn doth vex him, his wife hath the hero lost,
 The queen who was Arthur's mother; a clerk who all magic knew
 With him hath she fled, and Arthur doth after the twain pursue;
 'Tis now the third year since he lost them, his son alike and wife—
 And here is his daughter's husband, a hero well skilled in strife,
 King Lot is his name, of Norway—swift seeketh he knighthood's prize,
 But slow are his feet to falsehood, the knight so bold and wise.
 And here is his young son Gawain; as yet he too weak shall be
 For any deed of knighthood—but now was the boy with me,
 And he spake, were he not too feeble a spear-shaft as yet to break
 He were fain to do deeds of knighthood, in the Tourney his part would take!
 His lust for strife waketh early! Here Patrigalt's king hath brought
 Of spears a goodly forest; yet their valour shall be as naught
 When weighed against the gallant doings of the men of Portugal,
 Yea, *bold* we in truth may call them, and shields do they pierce right well.
 And here are the men of Provence, with many a blazoned shield;
 And here the Waleis, to their onslaught the foemen perforce must yield,
 And they ride at their will thro' the combat, for men of the land are they.
 Many fight here for love's rewarding whose title I may not say,
 But all whom I here have named thee now lie, and the truth I tell,
 At great cost here within the city, for so the queen deemed it well.'
 'And without on the plain they hold them who deem their prize lightly won,
 Proud Arragon's haughty monarch, and the brave king of Askalon.
 Eidegast, he is there from Logrois, and the King Brandelidelein
 (The monarch is he of Punturtois), there too is bold Lähelein.
 And Morhold is there of Ireland, many pledges that knight hath ta'en;
 And many a haughty German doth camp on that battle plain.
 To this country the Duke of Brabant hath come thro' the King Hardeiss;
 The king of Gascony gave him his sister the fair Aleiss,
 (Yet his service ere that won payment) wrath against me those princes drew:
 Now I trust *thee* to think of our kinship—For love's sake do me service true!'

Quoth the king of Zassamank, 'Cousin, no thanks would I have from thee
 Whate'er I may do for thine honour, my will e'en as thine shall be.
 Doth thine ostrich yet stand un-nested? Thou shalt carry its serpent's head
 'Gainst thy foeman's demi-gryphon, *my* anchor shall swift be sped,
 And find in his onslaught landing; himself shall a haven seek
 Behind his steed on the gravel! If our wrath we be fain to wreak,
 And ride one against the other, I fell him, or he felleth me—
 On my knightly faith as a kinsman this word do I swear to thee!'

Then Kailet he sought his lodging, and his heart it was gay and light.
 Then arose on the plain a war-cry, 'fore the face of two gallant knights,
 They were Schyolarz of Poitou, and Gurnemanz of Graharz,
 On the plain did they meet together; ere the eventide might pass
 The knights in their troops they rode forth, here by six and there by three,
 And they did gallant deeds of knighthood—nor otherwise might it be.

And now it was fully noontide, and the knight in his tent abode;
Then the king of Zassamank heard this, that o'er all the field they rode,
'O'er the length and the breadth they gallop, and in knightly order fight.'
And thither he rode, the hero, with many a banner bright;
But he rode not in search of conflict, at his leisure he thought to see
What was done by one side and the other of fair deeds of chivalry.
On the plain did they spread his carpet, where the knights in strife would close,
And the shriek of the wounded horses o'er all the tumult rose.
The squires stood round in a circle mid the clash of the ringing steel,
And the heroes for fair fame battled, and the swords sang for woe or weal.
There was sound as of splintered spear-shafts, but none need to question, Where?
And his walls were of meeting foemen, by knightly hands builded fair.
And so near was I ween the jousting that the maids from the hall above
Might look on the toil of the heroes—But sorrow the queen did move
Since the king of Zassamank did naught, nor mingled him in the fight,
And she quoth, 'Ah! why came he hither? I had deemed him a gallant knight!'
(Now the King of France, whose fair wife brought Gamuret sorrow sore
When he fought for her sake, lay lifeless, and the queen sought the wide world o'er
To know if from heathen countries he had come to his land again.
'Twas love's power to the search that drove her, for love did her heart constrain.)
And many brave deeds were done there of many a poor man bold,
Who yet for the highest strove not, which the queen for their prize had told,
Herself and her two fair kingdoms,—they thought not such prize to gain,
But they battled for other booty, tho' their hearts were for payment fain.
Now clad was Gamuret's body in the harness whereby his wife
Might bring to her mind forgiveness, and the ending of bitter strife.
The Scotch King Friedebrand sent it, as a gift, to repay the woe
That with conflict he heaped upon her, nor shall earth of its fellow know.
Then he looked well upon the diamond—'twas a helmet, thereon they bound
An anchor, and jewels so precious were within its setting found;
Nor small were the stones, but costly, and the weight it was none too light
Of that helmet, and yet he bare it, and decked was the guest for fight
And what was his shield's adorning? of gold of Araby fair,
And the boss it was rich and costly, and heavy the weight he bare.
And the red gold shone so brightly that mirrored the face therein,
And an anchor beneath of sable—I were fain to myself to win
That wherewith the knight was girded, full many a mark its worth.
And wide was the coat emblazoned, and it reached e'en unto the earth,
And I ween that few in battle such raiment shall think to wear.
And if I have skill to praise it, or its value aright declare,
It shone e'en as when there burneth thro' the night-time a living flame,
And never a tint was faded, and its shimmer as lightning came,
A feeble eye had feared it! And with gold was it all inwrought,
That in Kaukasus' distant mountains from out of the rock was brought
By gryphon claws, for they guarded, and shall guard it unto this day.
And from Araby came the people who stole it by craft away,—
Elsewhere shall be none so precious,—and they bare it to Araby
Where they weave Achmardi and Pfellel, and no vesture like *that* shall be!
His shield, round his neck he hung it—There stood a charger proud,
Well-nigh to the hoof was it armed—and the squires cried the war-cry loud,
And he sprang on his steed as he found it; and many a spear of might
Did he break with strong hand in the Tourney, and where men did the closest fight
There he brake a way thro' the mêlée, and came forth on the further side,
And ever behind the Ostrich the Anchor did close abide.
Gamuret smote from off his charger Poytewin of Prienlaskors

And many another hero, their pledge must they yield perforce.
But what knight bare the cross he rejoiced him in the hero's valiant deeds,
And much did he win by his valour, since he gave him the captured steeds.
Now four banners, with self-same bearing, were led 'gainst that gallant knight,
(And bold riders they rode beneath them, and their lord was a man of might.)
And on each was the tail of a gryphon; and that hinder part I trow
Was e'en as a hailstorm smiting, so rode they in goodly row.
And Gascony's king before them the fore part of that gryphon bare
On his shield; he was skilled in battle, and his body was armed full fair
As women alone might arm him; and he rode forth his knights before
Where he saw on a helm the Ostrich, but the Anchor towards him bore,
And he thrust him from off his charger, the brave king of Zassamank,
And made of him there his captive. Here close thronged the knightly ranks,
And the furrows were trodden level, and their locks must the sword-blade know,
And many a wood was wasted, and many a knight laid low—
And they who thus fell, 'twas told me, they turned their chargers round
And hied to the back of the Tourney, where none but the cowards were found.
And so near was I ween the combat that the women might see aright
Who there won the prize of valour; Rivalein that love-lorn knight
With his spear hewed afresh a token, of Loheneis was he king,
And the crash of the splintered spear-shaft did aye with his onslaught ring.
Of a knight did Morhold rob them, for he drew him from off his steed
And lifted him up before him (unseemly methinks such deed)
And Killirjacac they called him,—and ere this King Lac had ta'en
Such payment from him as in falling a knight from the earth may gain—
So his deeds had been fair and knightly; then this valiant man he thought
He would take him with never a sword-thrust, and the knight in his arms he caught.
Then the hand of the valiant Kaillet it smote from the saddle-bow
The Duke of Brabant, Prince Lambekein, and the hero was laid alow.
And what think ye they did, his soldiers? Their swords into shields they turned,
And with them did they guard their monarch—And ever for strife they yearned.
Then the King of Arragon smote him Uther Pendragon old,
From his charger adown on the meadow fell the king of the Bretons bold,
And the flowers stood fair around him—Ah! I courteous am I, I trow,
Since the Breton before Kanvoleis I lay on such couch alow,
Where never the foot of a peasant hath trodden unto this day,
Nay, perchance they may never tread there—'tis the truth and no lie I say—
No more might he keep his saddle as he sat on his steed of yore,
But his peril his friends forgat not, they fought fiercely the hero o'er.
And many a course was ridden; and the king of Punturtois
Fell prone in his horse's hoof-tracks on the field before Kanvoleis,
And low did he lie behind it—'Twas Gamuret dealt the blow—
'Ride on, on thy course, thou hero, and tread thy foemen low!'
Strife giveth whereon to trample! Then Kaillet, his kinsman true,
Made the Punturtois his captive, tho' he scarce pierced the mêlée thro'.
Brandelidelein was prisoner, and his folk they had lost their king,
In his stead another monarch to their host did they captive bring.
And hither and thither sped they, the heroes, in armour good,
And by blows and by trampling kneaded, of alum I ween their food;
And dark on their skin the swellings, and many a gallant knight
Might speak, as he knew, of bruises he had won him in hard-fought fight.
Now as simple truth I say it, little rest was their portion here,
By love were they forced to conflict, many shields with their blazon clear,
And many a goodly helmet whose covering the dust should be.
And the meadow with flowers was sprinkled, and green turf ye there might see,

And there fell on it many a hero, who of honour had won such meed—
More modest were my desiring! 'Twould content me to sit my steed.
Then the king of Zassamank rode forth a space from the knightly fray
Where a rested steed did wait him, and the diamond he loosed away,
With no thought of pride in the doing, but the breezes blew fresh and cool,
And the squires unbound his vizor, and his lips shone so red and full.
I have named unto ye a lady—Her chaplain did hither ride,
And with him three noble pages, and strong squires were there beside;
And pack-horses twain they led there, and the will of their queen they'd do,
She was Lady of France, Anflisé—Her chaplain was wise and true,
And straightway he knew the hero, and in French should his greeting be,
'Soit le bien venu, mon beau sire' to my lady as e'en to me,
As queen of France she reigneth whom the lance of thy love doth smite,
And he gave to his hand a letter, and therein read the gallant knight
A greeting fair, and a token it held of a finger-ring—
As pledge of the truth of his mission the chaplain the same must bring
His lady of old received it from the hand of the Angevin—
Then he bowed as he saw the letter. Would ye hear what was writ therein?
'Here biddeth thee love and greeting a heart that hath ne'er been free
From grief since it knew thy service—Thy love is both lock and key
To my heart, and my heart's rejoicing! For thy love am I like to die,
If thy love afar abideth, then all love from my heart shall fly.
Come thou, and take from my true hand crown, sceptre, and kingdom fair,
It falleth to me as heirdom, and thy love well may claim a share.
As payment for this thy service rich presents I send to thee,
Four pack-horses' chests well laden—I would thou my knight shouldst be
In this the land of the Waleis, 'fore the city of Kanvoleis.
I care not if the queen shall see it, small harm may therefrom arise,
For fairer am I, and richer, and I think me shall better know
To take the love that is proffered, and love in return bestow.
Wilt thou live in true love as shall 'seem thee? Then here do I bid thee take
My crown as thy love's rewarding—This I pray for my true love's sake.'
And no more did he find in the letter—Then his squires once more they drew
O'er his head the under-helmet; from Gamuret sorrow flew,
And he bound on the helm of diamond, 'twas harder than blade might pierce,
For he thought again to prove him, and ride forth to conflict fierce.
And the messengers did he bid them to lead to the tent for rest:
And he cleared a space around him wherever the conflict pressed.
This was vanquished, and that one victor—Did a knight o'er-long delay
To win to him fame in battle, his chance might he find to-day.
Here twain would joust together; in troops would these others ride;
And the customs of friendly combat for a space did they lay aside,
And sworn brotherhood nothing counted 'fore the strength of fierce anger's might,
And the crooked was seldom straightened; nor spake they of knightly right,
What they captured they kept, uncaring if another's hate they won,
And from many lands had they ridden who with brave hands brave deeds had done,
And their hurts but little grieved them. Here Gamuret heard her prayer,
And e'en as Anflisé bade him, as her knight to the field would fare;
'Twas a letter had brought the tidings—Ah! he giveth his courage rein,
Is it love or the lust of battle that driveth him on amain?
Great love and strong faith they quicken his strength into life anew.
Now see where his shield he beareth, King Lot, that hero true,
His foemen to flight had forced him save for Gamuret's strong right hand,
His charger in gallant onslaught brake its way thro' the threatening band,
And Arragon's king was smitten from his horse with a spear of reed,

'Schaffilor was his name, and the spear-point which thrust him from off his steed
 Bare never a waving pennon, from paynim lands 'twas brought,
 And the knight made the king his captive, tho' his folk they had bravely fought.
 And the inner force drave the outer far back on the grassy plain.
 'Twas a good vesper-play, yea, a Tourney; many spears did they smite in twain—
 Then Lähelein 'gain wax wrathful, 'Shall our honour be reft away?
 'Tis the fault of him of the Anchor! Now one of us twain to-day
 Shall lay in short space the other on a couch that he liketh ill,
 For here are they well-nigh victors!' Then they cleared them a space at will,
 And no child's play it was that combat—In such wise with their hands they wrought
 That a woodland was well-nigh wasted; and alike from their squires they sought
 'New spears! New spears! Bring them hither!' Yet Lähelein he must know
 Sorrow and shame, for his foeman thrust him down from his horse alow,
 And he smote him the length of the spear-iron in a shaft of reed made fast,
 And one read of itself his surety, for the knight to the earth was cast.
 (Yet better I like to read them, sweet pears on the ground that lie
 As thick as the knights lay round him! for his was the victory!)
 And the cry arose from many who had fallen in joust before,
 'Fly! Fly! For the Anchor cometh!' Then a knight towards him bore,
 (A prince of the Angevin country) and grief was his comrade true,
 For he bare a shield inverted, and sorrow it taught anew
 To the King, for the badge he knew it—Ah! why did he turn aside?
 If ye will, I the truth will tell ye, 'twas given in royal pride
 By Galoes the son of Gandein, Gamuret's brother true,
 Ere Love this guerdon gave him that the hero in joust she slew.
 Then he loosed from his head the helmet: nor thro' grass, nor thro' dust and sand
 Did he make him a way to the conflict, but he yielded to grief's command;
 And his thoughts within him battled, that he sought not ere this to hear
 From Kailet, his friend and kinsman, how it fared with his brother dear
 That he came not here to the Tourney—Alas! tho' he knew it not,
 He had fallen before Monthorie—Sore sorrow was there his lot,
 For to anguish did love constrain him, the love of a noble queen;
 For his loss had she grieved so sorely that death had her portion been.
 And tho' sorely Gamuret sorrowed, yet had he in half a day
 So many spear-shafts broken, were it Tourney indeed this fray
 Then had he a woodland wasted. Did I think me to count each spear
 One hundred in fight had he shattered, each blazoned with colours clear—
 But the heralds, they won his pennons, in sooth were they theirs of right—
 Then toward the fair pavilion he turned him, the gallant knight.
 And the Waleis squire rode after; and his was the coat so fair,
 All pierced and hewn with sword-thrust, which he did to his lady bear;
 And yet with gold was it precious, and it shone with a fiery glow,
 And right well might ye see its richness. Then joy did the queen's heart know,
 And she spake, 'A fair woman sent thee, with this knight, to this distant land!
 Now, courteous, I must bethink me lest these heroes ashamed shall stand
 Who have risked their fate in this venture—goodwill unto all I bear,
 For all do I count my kinsmen, since Adam's flesh we share,
 Yet Gamuret's hand, I think me, the highest prize hath won.'
 But by wrath constrained they battled till the shadows of night drew on,
 And the inner host the outer by force to their tents had brought,
 Save for Askalon's king and Morhold thro' the camp they their way had fought.
 Some were winners, and some were losers, and many sore shame had earned,
 While others won praise and honour. Then the foe from each other turned,
 Here no man might see—He who holdeth the stakes, if no light he show,
 Who would cast the dice in the darkness? To such sport were the weary slow!

Men well might forget the darkness where Gamuret did abide,
 'Twas as day—That in sooth it was not, but light shone on every side
 From many small tapers clustered. There, laid on the olive wood,
 Was many a costly cushion, and by each couch a carpet good.
 Then the queen, she rode to the doorway with many a maid of rank,
 For fain would they see, those ladies, the brave king of Zassamank.
 Many wearied knights thronged after—The cloth had they borne away
 Ere she came to the fair pavilion; then the host he uprose straightway,
 And the monarchs four his captives (and many a prince was there),
 And she welcomed him with due honour, and she saw him, and deemed him fair.
 Then glad spake the queen of the Waleis, 'Thou art host where we twain do stand,
 And I, even so I think me, am hostess o'er all this land,
 If thou deem it well I should kiss thee, such kiss seemeth good to me!'
 'Thy kiss shall be mine if these heroes, e'en as I, shall be kissed by thee,
 But if princes and kings must forego it, 'twere unfit I such boon should crave!'
 'Yea, e'en as thou wilt, so be it, tho' ne'er saw I these heroes brave!'
 Then she kissed, e'en as Gamuret prayed her, these princes of noble line,
 And he prayed her to sit, and beside her sat the King Brandelidelein!
 Then lightly they strewed, o'er the carpet, green rushes yet wet with dew,
 And he sat him down upon them whose presence brought joy anew
 To the gracious queen of the Waleis; and love did her soul constrain,
 And as Gamuret sat before her his hand did she clasp again,
 And she drew him once more towards her, and she set him her seat beside.
 No wife was she, but a maiden, from whose hand did such grace betide.
 Would ye know the name they called her? Herzeleide the queen was she,
 (And her cousin was hight Rischoydè, King Kaillet should her husband be,
 And *he* was Gamuret's cousin), and so radiant the queen, and bright,
 That e'en though they quenched the tapers, in her presence 'twould still be light!
 (Were it not that a mighty sorrow his joy which aloft would fly
 Had beaten to earth, I think me he had wooed her right readily.)
 And courteous they spake to each other: then cup-bearers drew anigh,
 And from Assagog the vessels, and their cost might no man deny;
 And noble pages bare them, many costly bowls and fair,
 Of precious jewels wroughten, and wide, none too small, they were,
 And none of them all were golden—'twas the tribute of that fair land,
 Which Eisenhart oft had proffered, when love's need nerved his knightly hand.
 And the drink unto each they proffered in many a coloured stone,
 And of emerald some, and of sardius, and of ruby some wrought alone.
 Then there drew near to his pavilion two knights who their word must swear,
 (To the outer host were they captive and from thence to the town would fare.)
 And one of them was King Kaillet; and he looked upon Gamuret,
 And he saw him sit heavy-hearted, and he spake, 'Dost thou sorrow yet
 For all men they own thy valour; Herzeleide and kingdoms twain
 Hast thou won, and all tongues have said it, to thy praises all men are fain,
 Be they Britons or men of Ireland—Who speaketh with foreign tongue,
 If France be their land, or Brabant, with one voice they thy praise have sung,
 That none here both skill and wisdom in strife like to thine have shown.
 True letter it is I read thee! No slumber thy strength hath known,
 When these knights thou hast put in peril who surety ne'er sware of old,
 Brandelidelein the monarch, and Lähelein, hero bold;
 And Hardeiss and King Schaffilor; yea, and Rassalig the Moor,
 Whom thine hand before Patelamunt o'erthrew and he surety swore,
 Such lesson thou there didst teach him—Yea, this doth thy fame desire
 That with every coming conflict it broader shall wax and higher.'
 'The queen sure will deem thou ravest, if in this wise thou praisest me,

Yet I think not that thou shalt sell me, since the buyer the flaw shall see;
 Thy mouth is o'er-full of praises! Say, how hast thou come again?'

'The worthy folk of Punturtois, this knight from fair Champagne
 And myself have loosed, and Morhold who this nephew hath stolen of mine
 Will set him free, if on thy part thou wilt free Brandelidelein;
 Otherwise are we captive to them, both I and my sister's son,
 But such grace thou wilt surely show us—Here such vesper-play was run
 That it cometh not to a Tourney this while before Kanvoleis,
 And in sooth do I know how it standeth! Here sit they before mine eyes,
 The strength of the outer army—now speak, tell me when and how
 They could hold the field against us? Much fame hast thou won, I trow!'

Then the queen she spake to the hero from a true heart full tenderly,
 'Whate'er be my claim upon thee, I pray thee to let it be.
 I were fain of thy service worthy—If here I my right shall claim,
 And thine honour thereby be tarnished, I will leave thee nor mar thy fame!'

Then he sprang to his feet, the chaplain of Anflisé the wise and fair,
 And he quoth, 'Nay, my queen doth claim him, at her will to this land I fare.
 For his love hath she sent me hither, for his love she afar doth pine,
 And her love layeth claim upon him and *hers* shall he be, not *thine*.
 O'er all women I ween doth she love him: here as messengers hath she sent
 Three princes, lads free from falsehood; and the one is hight Lazident
 Of noble birth from Greenland, and in Kärlingen doth he dwell,
 And his own hath he made the language; and the second his name I'll tell,
 Liodarz he, a count his father, and Schyolarz was he hight.
 And who was the third? Will ye hearken, his kinship I'll tell aright:
 Belleflur she hath been his mother, Pansamur was his father's name,
 Liahturteltart they called him, of the race of the fays he came.
 Then they ran all three before him, and they spake, 'Wouldst thy fortune prove?
 (The queen of France doth proffer the chance of a worthy love.)
 Thou shalt play the game, and never a pledge shall be asked from thee,
 Nor thy joy be to sorrow forfeit, as it waxeth still fair and free!'

Then e'en while they spake their errand Kaillet he had ta'en his seat
 'Neath a fold of the royal mantle, and she spake to him low and sweet,
 'Now say, hath worse harm befallen? Methinks I the wounds have seen?'

In that same hour his wounds and bruises she sought out, the gracious queen,
 With her white hands so small and shapely, which their wisdom from God must win,
 And sore was he cut and wounded on nose and on cheek and chin.
 He had won for his wife the cousin of the queen who such honour fair
 Would show him, herself would she tend him, and her hands for his hurts should care.
 Then e'en as courtesy bade her she spake unto Gamuret,
 'The fair queen of France, it seemeth, her heart upon thee hath set;
 Now honour in me all women, and give what I here may claim,
 Go not till men judge betwixt us, else thou leavest me here to shame.'

This he sware unto her, the hero, and leave she from him would crave,
 And she passed thence, and then King Kaillet, that monarch so true and brave,
 He lifted her to her saddle; and he turned him about once more
 And came into the pavilion, where his kinsman and friends he saw.
 Then spake he unto King Hardeiss, 'Aleiss thy sister fair
 She proffered her love, I took it—Now wedded is she elsewhere,
 And a better than I is her husband! No longer thus wrathful frown,
 Prince Lambekein, he hath won her—tho' in sooth she shall wear no crown,
 Yet honour enough is her portion—Brabant and Hennegau
 Do her service, and many a brave knight doth unto her bidding bow.
 If thy mind it shall turn to greet me let thy favour be mine once more,
 And take thou again my service of a true heart as aye of yore.'

Then the king of Gascony answered as befitted a hero brave,
 'Yea, soft is thy speech, yet if greeting I give thee as thou dost crave,
 Who hath offered to me such insult, men will deem *fear* such grace hath won,
 For captive am I to thy cousin!' 'Yet ill shall he deal with none,
 Gamuret, he shall grant thy freedom, that boon my first prayer shall be:
 No man shall thereto constrain thee, yet my service the day shall see
 When thou as thy friend shalt claim me. For the shame, 'tis enow I wot,
 For whate'er *thou* mayst do against me, thy sister, she slayeth me not!'

Then all at his words laughed loudly. But their mirth it was soon o'erpast
 For his true heart the host constrained, and desire held him once more fast,
 And a sharp goad I ween is sorrow—Then the heroes they saw right well
 How he wrestled anew with sorrow and his joy in the conflict fell;
 And his cousin he waxed right wrathful, and he spake, 'Now thou doest ill.'
 'Nay, nay, for I needs must sorrow, and naught may my yearning still
 For the queen I have left behind me, afar on a heathen shore,
 Pure wife and true is that lady, and my heart she hath wounded sore.'
 'And her purity doth constrain me to mourn for her love so sweet,
 Vassals and lands she gave me; yet joy for a true knight meet
 Belakané of that hath robbed me! yet shame for a wavering mind
 I think me is right and manly—With such fetters her love did bind
 That she held me afar from Tourney, nor in search of strife I went;
 Then I thought me that deeds of knighthood should free me from ill-content,
 And here have I somewhat striven—Now many a fool would say
 That I, for her colour, fled her, to my eyes was she light as day!
 For her womanhood true I sorrow; o'er all others her worth stood high
 As the boss from the shield outstandeth. And another grief have I,
 And here make I my moan unto ye, my brother's arms I saw,
 But the shield on which they were blazoned, with point up-turned they bore.'
 (Ah! woe for the words that are spoken, and the tidings of grief they bring!)
 His eyes they o'erflowed with water, that gallant Spanish king,
 'Alas! O queen for thy madness, thro' thy love is Galoes slain,
 Whom every faithful woman from her heart shall mourn amain
 If she would that her dealing win her true honour in true man's thought.
 Ah! queen of Auvergne I think me, tho' small grief it to thee hath brought,
 Yet thro' thee have I lost my kinsman, tho' his ending was fit and fair,
 For a knightly joust hath slain him who thy token in strife would bear!
 And these princes here, his comrades, their heartfelt grief they show,
 As in funeral train their shield's-breadth do they turn to the earth below,
 For thus hath great sorrow taught them—In this guise do they knightly deeds,
 Heavy-hearted that he, my cousin, serveth no more for true love's meed!'

He hath won him another heart-grief as his brother's death is told,
 And he spake aloud in his sorrow, 'Now mine anchor hath found its hold
 And its haven in bitter rueing,' and the badge did he lay aside,
 And his grief taught him bitter anguish, and aloud the hero cried,
 'Galoes of Anjou! henceforward shall never a man deny
 That on earth ne'er was born thine equal for manhood and courtesy,
 And the fruit of a free hand knightly from thine heart did it bloom amain.
 Ah! woe is me for thy goodness!' then to Kailet he spake again,
 'How goeth it with Schoettè, my mother, of joy bereft?'
 'So that God hath had pity on her! When Gandein this life had left,
 And dead was Galoes thy brother, and thou wert not by her side,
 And she saw thee no more, then death brake her heart, and she too hath died!'

Then out quoth the Gascon Hardeiss, 'Turn thy will to a manly mien,
 Thou shalt mourn but in fitting measure if true manhood thine own hath been!'

But too great was the load of his sorrow, and the tears as a flood must flow

From his eyes—Then all things he ordered that the knights a fair rest might know,
And he went where he saw his chamber, of samite the little tent,
And in grief and sore lamentation the hours of the night he spent.
When there dawned another morning the knights together came,
The inner host and the outer, all who thought there to win them fame;
Were they young or old, were they cowardly or brave, they fought not that day.
And the light grew to middle morning: yet so worn were they with the fray,
And the horses so spent with spurring, that the knights in battle tried
Were yet by weariness vanquished—Then the queen herself would ride,
And the valiant men from the open would she bring to the town again,
And the best of the knights within there she bade ride to the Leo-plain;
And straightway they did her bidding, and they rode in their knightly ranks,
And they came ere the Mass was ended to the sad king of Zassamank.
Then the benediction spoken, Herzeleide the queen she came,
And e'en as the folk upheld her, so she laid to the knight her claim:
Then he spake, 'A wife have I Lady, and than life shall she be more dear,
Yea, and e'en if I were without her thou another tale shouldst hear
That afar should drive me from thee, if men here shall list my right!'
But the queen she looked upon him, and she spake to the gallant knight:
'Thou shalt leave thy Moorish lady for my love; stronger far shall be
The blessing that baptism giveth! From heathendom set thee free,
And wed me in Christian marriage, since my heart for thy love doth yearn.
Or say shall the French queen's message to my shame and my sorrow turn?
Sweet words did they speak her people, and thou heardest them to the end!'
'Yea, she is in truth my lady. When I back to Anjou must wend,
Then fair counsels and courteous customs with me from her land I brought;
Yea, even to-day doth she help me whom from childhood to man she taught.
She hath fled all that mars a woman—We were children then, she and I,
Yet gladly we saw each other in the days that are long gone by!
The noble queen Anflisé, in true womanhood hath she share,
From her lands a goodly income she gave me, that lady fair,
(In those days was I still a poor man), yet I took it right willingly,
As a poor man thou still shalt count me, and Lady, shalt pity me,
He is dead, my gallant brother—Of thy courtesy press me not,
Turn thy love where thou findest gladness, for sorrow is aye my lot!'
'Nay, let me not longer sorrow; how wilt thou deny my claim?'
'Thy question I'll gladly answer, here a *Tourney* thou didst proclaim,
That *Tourney* hath not been holden, as many shall witness bear'
'For the vesper-play hath marred it! The knights who had foughten there
So well have they tamed their ardour that the *Tourney* hath come to naught,'
'I did but defend thy city with others that bravely fought;
Thou shouldst force me not to withstand thee, here have others done more than I,
Mine the greeting that *all* may claim here, other right would I still deny!'
Then, so hath the venture told me, they chose them, both man and maid,
A judge o'er the claim of the lady, and their cause they before him laid,
And it drew near to middle morning, and thus did the verdict run,
'What knight hath bound on his helmet, and hath hither for conflict come,
And hath fought, and the prize hath holden, then that knight he shall wed the queen.'
And unto the judgment spoken the knights gave consent I ween.
Spake the queen, 'Mine thou art, and I'll yield thee fair service thy love to gain,
And will give thee of joy such portion that thy life shall be free of pain!'
And yet bare he grief and sorrow—Now the April sun was o'er,
And had left behind a token in the garment the meadow bore,
With short green grass was it covered, so that coward hearts waxed bold,
And won afresh high courage; and the trees did their buds unfold

In the soft sweet air of the May-tide, and he came of the fairy race
That aye loveth, or sweet love seeketh, and his friend she would show him grace.
Then he looked on Queen Herzeleide, and he spake to her courteously,
'If in joy we would live, O Lady, then my warder thou shalt not be,
When loosed from the bonds of sorrow, for knighthood my heart is fain;
If thou holdest me back from Tourney I may practise such wiles again
As of old when I fled from the lady whom I won with mine own right hand;
When from strife she would fain have kept me I fled from her folk and land!'
Then she spake, 'Set what bonds thou willest, by thy word will I still abide.'
'Many spears would I break asunder, and each month would to Tourney ride,
Thou shalt murmur not O Lady when such knightly joust I'd run!'
This she sware, so the tale was told me, and the maid and her lands he won.
The three pages of Queen Anflisé and her chaplain were nigh at hand,
As the judgment was sealed and spoken they must hearken and understand,
And he spake to the knight in secret, 'To my lady this tale was told
How at Patelamunt thy valour did the guerdon of victory hold,
And that there two kingdoms served thee—And she too hath lands I trow,
And she thinketh *herself* to give thee, and riches and gold enow!'
'As knighthood of old she taught me so must I hold fast alway
By the strength of the knightly order, and the rule of the shield obey.
Thro' her my shield have I won me, else perchance I had worn it not,
Here doth knightly verdict bind me, be sorrow or joy my lot.
Go ye homeward, and bear my service, her knight will I ever be,
And for her is my deepest sorrow tho' all crowns were awaiting me!'
Then he proffered to them of his riches, but his gifts did they cast aside.
Yet was she not shamed their lady, tho' homeward they needs must ride!
And they craved not leave, but they rode thence, as in anger ye oft shall find,
And the princes' sons, her pages, well-nigh did they weep them blind.
They who bare their shields inverted their friends spake to them this word,
'The queen, fair Herzeleide, hath the Angevin for her lord.'
'Say, who from Anjou hath fought here? Our lord is, alas, elsewhere;
He seeketh him fame 'gainst the heathen, and grief for his sake we bear!'
'He who shall be here the victor, who hath smitten full many a knight,
He who smote and pierced so fiercely, he who bare on his helm of light
An anchor rare and costly, that knight is the knight we mean,
And King Kaillet he spake his title, Gamuret Angevin—I ween
Good fortune doth here befall him!' Then swift to their steeds they sprung,
And their raiment was wet with the tear-drops that grief from their eye-lids wrung,
When they came where their lord was seated they gave him a welcome fair,
And he in his turn would greet them, and sorrow and joy were there.
Then he kissed his knights so faithful, and spake, 'Ye no more shall make
Such measureless moan for my brother, his place I with ye will take.
Turn your shields again as befits them, and as men who would joyful fare;
My anchor hath struck its haven; my father's arms I'll bear,
For the anchor it is a symbol that befitteth a wandering knight,
He who willet may take and wear it. I must rule my life aright
As now shall become my station: I am rich now, when shall I be
The lord of this folk? For my sorrow it worketh but ill to me.
Queen Herzeleide, help me that thou and I may pray
The kings that are here and princes for my service awhile to stay,
Till thou unto me hast yielded that which love from true love may crave!'
Thus both of them made petition, and the heroes their promise gave.
Then each one went to his chamber, and the queen to her knight spake low,
'Now yield thyself to my tending, and a hidden way I'll show!'
For his guests did they care as fitting tho' the host was no longer there,

The folk they were all together, but the knight he alone must fare
 Save for two of his pages only—Then the queen and her maidens bright
 They led him where gladness waited, and his sorrow was put to flight,
 And regret was o'erthrown and vanquished—And his heart it waxed high and brave
 As is ever the lot of lovers! and her maidenhood she gave
 The queen, fair Herzeleide: nor their lips did they think to spare,
 But close did they cling in kisses; grief was conquered by joy so fair!
 Then courteous deeds were begun there; for free were his captives set,
 And the Kings Hardeiss and Kaillet were made friends by Gamuret.
 And such marriage feast was holden that he who had proudly thought
 Hereafter to hold such another much riches thereto had brought.
 For this did Gamuret purpose, his wealth he would little spare,
 But Arabian gold did he scatter mid the poor knights; and jewels rare
 Did he give to the kings and princes who were there with the host I ween;
 And glad were the wandering players, for rich gifts had their portion been.
 Let them ride whom he there had feasted, from the Angevin leave they prayed.
 Then the panther the badge of his father on his shield they in sable laid;
 And a small white silken garment, a shift that the queen did wear,
 That had touched her naked body who now was his wife so fair,
 This should be his corslet's cover. And of foemen it saw eighteen
 Pierced thro' and hewn with sword-blade ere he parted from her his queen,
 And aye as her love came homeward on her body that shift she drew:
 And many a shield had he shattered; and their love it waxed strong and true.
 And honour enow was his portion ere his manly courage bore
 The knight o'er the seas to conflict, for his journey I sorrow sore.
 For there came unto him true tidings, how the Baruch, his lord of old,
 Was beset by mighty foemen, by Babylon's princes bold:
 And the one he was called Ipomidon, and Pompey his brother's name
 (For so hath the venture told me), a proud man of warlike fame.
 ('Twas not he whom Julius Cæsar had driven from Rome of yore).
 His uncle was Nebuchadnezzar, who in books found the lying lore
 That he himself should a god be, (o'er this would our folk make sport)
 And of noble race these brothers, nor of strength nor of gold spared aught.
 From Ninus they came who was ruler ere ever Bagdad might be,
 Nineveh did he found—Now an insult and a shame vexed them bitterly,
 The Baruch as vassals claimed them—So the combat was won and lost,
 And bravely the heroes battled, and on each side they paid the cost.
 Thus Gamuret sailed the water, and aid to the Baruch brought,
 And gladly he bade him welcome; tho' I weep that that land he sought!
 How it chanced there, how went the conflict, gain or loss, how the thing might be
 Naught of that knew Queen Herzeleide; and bright as the sun was she,
 And her form it was fair to look on, and both riches had she and youth,
 And more than too much her gladness! I think me in very truth
 She had sped past the goal of all wishes—And on wisdom her heart was set,
 And she won from the whole world favour; her fair deeds with fair guerdon met,
 And all men praised Herzeleide, the queen, as both fair and true,
 And the queen of three kingdoms was she, of Waleis and fair Anjou,
 Of these twain was she aye the ruler; and beside them in far Norgals
 Did she bear the crown and sceptre, in the city of Kingrivals.
 And so dear did she hold her husband, if never a maid might win
 So gallant a man, what recked she? She counted it not for sin.
 As for half a year he was absent she looked for his coming sure,
 For but in the thought of that meeting might the life of the queen endure.
 Then brake the sword of her gladness thro' the midst of the hilt in twain,
 Ah me! and alas! for her mourning, that goodness should bear such pain

And faith ever waken sorrow! Yea, so doth it run alway
With the life of men, and to-morrow must they mourn who rejoice to-day!
So it chanced that the queen one noontide in a restless slumber lay,
'Twas as if with a start she wakened and by lightning was borne away,
And towards the clouds it bare her, and they smote her with mighty force,
The fiery bolts of Heaven, as they sped on their downward course,
And sparks sprang from her floating tresses mid the fire of the circling spheres,
And the thunder crashed loud around her, and the rain-drops were burning tears.
For a little space was she conscious, then a grip on her right hand fell,
And, lo! it was changed, the vision, and wondrous things befell;
For then did she nurse a dragon, that forth from her body sprung,
And its dragon life to nourish awhile at her breast it hung,
Then it fled from her sight so swiftly she might look on it never more:
And her heart it brake for the anguish, and the terror and grief she bore.
And never methinks a woman in slumber such woe hath seen,
But now had she been so joyful, alas! all was changed I ween,
And sorrow should be her portion, and her ill it waxed long and wide,
And the shadow of coming sorrow did still on her heart abide.
Then she did what afore she could not, for the terror that on her lay,
She stretched her limbs in her slumber, and moaned in her grief alway,
And she cried aloud on her people; and many a maid sat by
And they sprang to her side at her summons, and wakened her speedily.
Then Tampaneis he came riding, of her husband's squires the chief,
And many a page was with him, and joy's goal was o'erpassed in grief,
And they cried, 'He was dead, their master!' And her senses forsook the queen,
And she fell aback in her anguish—And the knights spake, 'How hath this been?
Hath our lord been slain in his harness, who ever was armed so well?'
And tho' sorely the squire must sorrow, to the heroes the tale he'd tell:
'No long life should he have, my master! His helm he put off awhile,
The heat thereto constrained him—'twas accursed heathen guile
That stole him from us, our hero—A knight took a he-goats blood,
And from a long glass he poured it on the helmet of diamond good,
And softer than sponge grew the diamond. May He Whom as Lamb they show
With the Cross in His hold, have mercy on the deeds that are wrought below!'
'Then when one host met the other: Ah! that was indeed a fight,
And the knights who were with the Baruch they fought all as men of might,
And there in the field by Bagdad full many a shield was pierced,
As they flew each one on the other, and they mingled in charges fierce,
And banner was mixed with banner, many fell who had bravely fought,
And my lord's hand it did such wonders that his foemen became as nought,
But Ipomidon he came riding, and with death would reward the knight,
And he smote him down, and I think me many thousands they saw that sight.'
'For my master, free from falsehood, rode against Alexandria's king,
But, alas! for the guile of the heathen, this joust but his death should bring,
For the spear cut sheer thro' the helmet, and it pierced thro' my master's brain
(In his head did they find the splinters), yet the hero still held the rein,
And dying he rode from the combat, o'er a wide plain his way he'd take,
And his chaplain he knelt above him, and in few words his shrift he spake.
And he sent here the shift and the spear-blade that hath robbed us of our friend,
He died free from sin—us his servants he did to the queen commend!'
'At Bagdad was the hero buried, and the Baruch the cost would pay,
With gold is it fair to look on, and rich is the tomb alway;
And many a costly jewel doth gleam where he lies at rest,
And embalmed was the fair young body (sad was many a faithful breast);
And the grave-stone it is a ruby, and thro' it he shineth clear,

And they granted us as with martyrs, the cross o'er his tomb to rear,—
 For as Christ by His death hath freed us, and to comfort that soul so brave,
 And for shelter we raised the symbol—And the Baruch the cost he gave.
 For the cross was of emerald wroughten: heathen counsel we asked it not,
 For they know not the Cross, nor the blessing that Christ's death won for us I wot!
 And the heathen they pray unto him as if he were a god in truth,
 Nor they do it the Cross to honour, nor hath Baptism taught them ruth
 (Tho' it looseneth *us* from Hell's fetters when the uttermost day shall dawn),
 But his knightly faith and honour, who leaveth us here forlorn,
 Have wrought him a place in Heaven where he shineth with Heaven's light,
 And true penitence and confession—for falsehood e'er fled that knight.'
 'And there in his diamond helmet an epitaph did they grave,
 And fast to the cross they fixed it o'er the tomb of that hero brave,
 And thus do they run the letters: '*Through this helmet a joust hath slain*
This hero who bare all manhood, and Gamuret was his name,
As king did he rule o'er three kingdoms, in each land the Crown he wore
Whom mighty princes followed—Anjou's land this hero bore,
And he lost his life for the Baruch at the city of Bagdad fair.
And so high did it soar, his honour, that no knight may with him compare,
Howe'er ye may test their dealings. Nor is he of woman born,
(I mean of the knightly order) to whose hand he his strength had sworn.
But help and true manly counsel to his friends did he steadfast give;
And thro' women much grief he suffered, for he would in their favour live.
Baptized was he as a Christian tho' Saracens mourn him yet,
(This is truth and no lie)—All his lifetime since his years were on wisdom set
His strength strove for fame and honour, till he fell in his knightly pride,
Wish him bliss who here lieth buried! 'Twas by treason's hand he died!"
 So spake the squire, and the Waleis who heard it must weep full sore,
 Cause hast they enow for sorrow! A living child she bore
 Who of men was left unaided, Herzeleide the gracious queen,
 With death the mother battled: her maidens were crazed I ween,
 Since they thought not to help their lady, for within her womb she bare
 Him who should be flower of all knighthood, if death did not claim him there.
 Then there came a wise man ancient to weep with his lady's grief,
 And he saw how with death she struggled, and he brought to her swift relief;
 For he forced her teeth asunder, and betwixt her lips they pour
 Water, and at their tending her senses they came once more.
 Then she spake, and aloud she mourned him, 'My heart's dearest, Ah! where is he?
 For in sooth my heart's deepest gladness was in Gamuret's chivalry,
 Yet his valour of this hath robbed me—Now his *mother* am I and *wife*,
 Tho' far younger was I, for within me do I carry his flesh and life;
 The love that we bore to each other hath been of such flower the root,
 And if God shall in truth be faithful, He withholdeth not here the fruit.
 Already too sore my sorrow for my husband so proud and brave,
 What ill death hath wrought upon me! Her love never woman gave,
 But his heart it rejoiced in her gladness, and sad for her grief was he,
 Thus his true heart it gave him counsel who was aye from all falsehood free.'
 Now hearken yet more the story how the noble queen must mourn,
 Within her arms would she hold him, her child who was yet unborn,
 And she spake, 'Now God send me safely the child of my hero fair,
 For this is my heart's petition; God keep me from dark despair,
 'Twere Gamuret's second slaying if I thought myself to slay
 While I bear of his love the token who was faithful to me alway!'
 Then careless of who might see her, the robe from her neck she tore,
 And her fair white breasts she tended with the wisdom of mother-lore,

To her rosy lips she pressed them, 'Ah, thou food that shall feed my son,
 He hath sent thee before his coming who life from my life hath won!'

And the queen it nothing vexed her that above her heart it lay
 The milk that her child should nourish, and softly she spake alway,
 'Twas true love that brought thee hither, if I yet unbaptized should be
 From thee had I won my baptism, and the tears which shall flow so free,
 And openly and in secret will I mourn for my husband dear!'

Then the shift with his life-blood crimsoned she bade them to bring anear,
 (Thus clad in the Baruch's army had Gamuret lost his life,
 For he chose him a gallant ending in the turmoil and stress of strife),
 And then for the spear she prayed them wherewith was her husband slain,
 From Nineveh's Prince Ipomidon such guerdon he needs must gain.
 And tho' tattered and hewn to pieces yet the queen fain the shift would wear,
 As aforetime had been her custom when her lord did from Tourney fare,
 But her maidens who stood around her they took it from out her hand,
 And they carried them to the Minster, the highest from out her land,
 And the spear and the blood they buried as men bury a hero dead,
 And sorrow and bitter mourning thro' Gamuret's kingdom spread.
 And when fourteen days were ended a babe lay the queen beside,
 'Twas a son, and so great and goodly that the mother had well-nigh died.
 Now 'tis cast the die of the venture, and here doth my tale begin,
 For now is he born who henceforward this song for his own shall win.
 And now have ye heard the story of his father, his love and grief,
 Of his gallant life, and the treason that ended its span so brief;
 And ye know whence he came, the hero of this tale, and how for long
 He was hidden from deeds of knighthood, till his youth it waxed bold and strong.
 When the queen found sight and hearing she was fain on her child to look,
 And her maidens they bare him to her and the babe in her arms she took;
 And she saw his limbs soft rounded, and she knew she had born a son,
 And her maidens with her were joyful that the earth had a man-child won.
 (As he bare of a man the body, so manly was he of heart,
 As a smith did he wield the sword-blade till fire from the helm would start)
 And no joy did she know, the mother, save ever her babe to kiss,
 And with soft words she spake to him ever, '*Bon fils, Cher fils, Beau fils.*'
 And e'en as herself she bare him, so herself she his nurse would be,
 At his mother's breast was he nourished who was ever from falsehood free.
 And she thought she had won her husband by her prayers to her arms again,
 She all folly forsook, and meekness and truth in her heart did reign.
 And musing spake Herzeleide, 'The queen of Heaven high
 Gave her breast to the dear Lord Jesu Who a bitter death would die
 As Man on the cross for man's sake, for thus did His love begin:
 Who thinketh light of His anger his soul's peace shall hardly win,
 Tho' he else were brave man and worthy—and this tale do I know for true!'

Then the queen of the land she bathed her in heart sorrow's bitter dew,
 And her eyes on the babe rained tear-drops as soft in her arms it lay,
 For hers was the way of women, where a true heart holdeth sway;
 She could laugh and weep together, her heart joyed for her baby's birth,
 Yet the ford of her bitter sorrow had drowned in short space her mirth.

BOOK III GURNEMANZ

Is there ever a singer among you, who singeth a sweeter song
 Of the favour and love of women, I hold not he does me wrong!
 Full fain am I still to hearken to aught that may give them joy,
 But to one alone among women my homage I still deny.
 Nay, ever the fire of my anger doth kindle and flame anew,

And the sorrow her treason wrought me, it grieveth me still I trow!
 I, whom men have named the singer, I, Wolfram of Eschenbach,
 The words that against a woman I spake, I may ne'er take back.
 Nay, I hold fast my wrath for ever, and clasp it closer still,
 As I think how in soul and body alike hath she wrought me ill!
 How can I do aught but hate her, till death setteth seal on life?
 Yet it grieveth me sore that others should mingle in this our strife;
 It grieveth me sore that maidens should say, as they name my name,
 'Forsooth he hath shamed all women, let it be unto him for shame!'
 Nay, then, an they reckon for evil the words that in grief I spake,
 I will speak them no more for ever, though my heart should in silence break!
 But let them beware in their anger, these warlike maidens fair,
 How they stir from his eyrie the eagle, rouse the lion from his lair!
 Full well I know how to defend me, full well know I what beseems
 The maid of a knight's devotion, the maid of the poet's dreams!
 Let a maiden be steadfast-hearted, pure and true in word and deed,
 And her champion true she'll find me, comes there ever an hour of need.
 I hold his renown waxeth slowly, and halteth upon the road,
 Who, for wrong at the hand of one woman, shall slander all womanhood:
 But if any will look upon me, and hearken to what I sing,
 Of a sooth I will not deceive them, though my tale over-strange may ring.
 Born was I unto the bearing of knightly shield and spear,
 And though sweet be the song of the singer, I hold it not all too dear:
 I had rather my love should love me for my deeds of high renown,
 Than because in the hall of the Wartburg they should crown me with music's crown!
 With the shield and the spear of knighthood will I seek for a knight's reward,
 Nor charm, with the harp of the singer, what I failed to win with the sword!
 Nor in praise of fair women only runs this tale that I have to tell,
 Full many strange deeds it holdeth, and marvels that once befell
 Ere the course of this wondrous venture be traced unto its end;
 Yet he who heareth shall reckon, if he fain would account me friend,
 That this is no book he readeth, for no maker of books am I!
 But a singer of strange adventures, and of knightly prowess high:
 Stripped bare will I be of all honour, naked and reft of fame,
 Ere I trust my renown unto letters, and give to a book my name!
 It vexes me, soul and body, that so many should bear the name
 And speak with the tongue of women, who reck not of woman's fame;
 That those who have known no falsehood, and those who are swift to fall,
 Should carry one name in common, be counted as sisters all!
 A truth that has faltered never, a faith that has aye withstood,
 Is the only glory of woman, the crown of her womanhood!
 Many will say, 'What good thing can come out of poverty?'
 She who for love endures it, she 'scapeth Hell thereby,
 And, in the kingdom of Heaven, receiveth a hundredfold
 For all she has borne for love's sake, new joys for her sorrows old!
 Not one have I known in my lifetime, I count it a bitter truth,
 Neither a man nor a maiden, who the joy and the pride of youth,
 And all earth's riches and honour, will leave as a worthless thing
 If weighed with the glory of Heaven, and the service of Heaven's King!
 But Queen Herzeleide only, she left her fair estate,
 In her youth of all joy bereaved, with sorrow afar to mate.
 So holy was she and gentle, so faithful and pure of mind,
 That no tongue spake a word against her, and no eye a fault could find.
 Sunlight or shadow, what recked she? the day was to her as night,
 For her heart was the home of sorrow, and dead was the world's delight.

And in sorrow and grief she wandered, till she came to Soltanè's strand,
A woodland wild and lonely afar from her native land:
Fair flowers might bloom and blossom without, on the sunlit plain,
And be woven in rosy chaplets, but for her they would bloom in vain!
And there, mid the woodland shadows, she hid with Gamuret's son,
For she willed that her life's last treasure be revealed unto none:
So she called her folk around her, (who toiled in the upland field
With oxen and plough, that the furrows their daily bread might yield,)
And she charged them all, by the service which she as their queen might claim,
That they hide from the boy his birthright and the fame of his father's name.
'For the knightly deeds ye vaunt of, and the glory and pride of war,
Have wrought me but heart's affliction, and trouble and anguish sore,
So, lest I yet more should suffer, I pray you, my servants dear,
That ye speak no word of knighthood, lest my son perchance should hear!'
Then full sore were her people grievèd, for they held it an evil thing,
And a training that ill beseemèd the son of a mighty king.
But his mother kept him hidden in the woodland valleys wild,
Nor thought in her love and sorrow how she wronged the kingly child:
No knightly weapon she gave him, save such as in childish play
He wrought himself from the bushes that grew on his lonely way,
A bow and arrows he made him, and with these, in thoughtless glee,
He shot at the birds as they carolled o'erhead in the leafy tree.
But when the feathered songster of the woods at his feet lay dead,
In wonder and dumb amazement he bowed down his golden head,
And in childish wrath and sorrow tore the locks of his sunny hair;
(For I wot well of all earth's children was never a child so fair
As this boy, who afar in the desert from the haunts of mankind did dwell,
Who bathed in the mountain streamlet, and roamed o'er the rock-strewn fell!)
Then he thought him well how the music, which his hand had for ever stilled,
Had thrilled his soul with its sweetness, and his heart was with sorrow filled,
And the ready tears of childhood flowed forth from their fountains free
As he ran to his mother weeping, and bowed him beside her knee.
'What aileth thee child?' quoth the mother, 'but now wast thou gay and glad'—
But, childlike, he gave no answer, scarce wist he what made him sad!
But Queen Herzeleide watched him through the sunny summer days,
Till beneath a tree she saw him stand silent, with upturned gaze,
And a look of joyful rapture in the radiant childish eyes,
As he listed the bird, that, soaring, sang clear thro' the cloudless skies;
And the mother's heart was troubled, and her wrath waxed to fever heat,
She would brook in his love no rival—not even God's singers sweet!
So she sent forth in haste her servants, with many a cunning snare
To capture the singers whose music made joyful the woodlands fair.
Then, alas! for the birds, who struggled in the cruel snare in vain,
Yet some few burst their bonds, and joyful, brake forth into song again!
Then the boy spake, 'Now sweet my mother, why trouble the birds so sore?
Forsooth they can ne'er have harmed thee, ah, leave them in peace once more!'
And his mother kissed him gently, 'Perchance I have wrought a wrong,
Of a truth, the dear God who made them, He gave unto them their song,
And I would not that one of his creatures should sorrow because of me.'
But the boy looked up in wonder, 'God, Mother? Who may God be?'
'My son, He is light beyond all light, brighter than summer's day,
And He bare a Man's Face, that we men might look on His Face alway!
Art thou ever in need of succour? call on Him in thine hour of ill,
And be sure He will fail thee never, but will hear thee, and help thee still.
Yet one there is dwelleth in darkness, and I wot men may fear him well,

For his home is the house of falsehood, and his kingdom the realm of Hell!
 Turn thy mind away from him ever, nor waver betwixt the twain,
 For he who doubteth, his labour shall ever be wrought in vain.'
 Thus his mother read him the riddle, the myst'ry of day and night,
 The dread and the doom of darkness, and the glory and grace of light!
 Then javelin in hand he hastened thro' the forest pathways wild,
 And the deer sprang up from their thickets, and fled from the dauntless child;
 But clear-eyed and eager-footed he hastened upon their track,
 And full oft with a hornèd trophy, at even he hied him back.
 Little cared he for rain or sunshine, summer's storm or winter's snow,
 And daily in strength and beauty all men might behold him grow;
 Till at length no beast so mighty thro' the forest wild did roam,
 If it fell 'neath his shaft, unaided, on his shoulder he bore it home!
 It chanced thro' a woodland thicket one morn as he took his way,
 And brake from o'erhanging bushes full many a leafy spray,
 That a pathway steep and winding rose sharply his track anear,
 And the distant beat of horse-hoofs fell strange on his wondering ear.
 Then the boy grasped his javelin firmly and thought what the sound might be;
 'Perchance 'tis the devil cometh! Well, I care not if it be he!
 Methinks I can still withstand him, be he never so fierce and grim,
 Of a truth my lady mother she is o'er-much afraid of *him*!
 As he stood there for combat ready, behold, in the morning light,
 Three knights rode into the clearing, in glittering armour bright;
 From head to foot were they armèd, each one on his gallant steed,
 And the lad as he saw their glory thought each one a god indeed!
 No longer he stood defiant, but knelt low upon his knee,
 And cried, 'God, Who helpeth all men, I pray Thee have thought for me!'
 Then wroth was the foremost rider as the lad barred his further way,
 And he spake out, 'This stupid *Waleis* will hinder our work to-day!'
 (Now here would I give to the *Waleis* the fame we Bavarians hold;
 They are duller than e'en our people, yet manly in strife and bold.
 And in sooth were one born in both countries such marvel of strength and skill
 Would he hide in himself that I think me their fame he might well fulfil!)
 Then there rode swift with hanging bridle, in costly harness dight,
 With plumed and jewelled helmet another gallant knight;
 Swiftly he came as thirsting to challenge in mortal fight
 The foe who sped far before him, who had done him a sore despite;
 For two knights from out his kingdom a maiden had borne away,
 And he held it a deed most shameful and one he must needs repay;
 For the maiden's sorrow grieved him, and fain would he ease her pain:
 (And the three knights who rode before him were part of his warlike train.)
 He rode a Spanish war-horse, and his shield had fierce conflict seen,
 And Karnachkarnanz did they call him (he was Ulterleg's count I ween).
 Then he cried to his knights, 'Why loiter? who barreth our onward way?'
 And straight on the lad did he ride there, who deemed him a god alway,
 For ne'er had he seen such glory; his harness shone fair with dew,
 And on either foot the stirrups with golden bells rang true.
 And their length was e'en as fitting, and with bells did each strong arm ring,
 As he stirred himself, or his sword-blade in battle aloft would swing.
 And the hero was swift in seeking the guerdon of knightly prize,
 So he rode here, the prince, and had decked him in a fair and wondrous wise.
 Then spake this flower of all knighthood, 'Say, boy, did they pass thy way?
 Two knights who have shamed their knighthood, nay, *robbers* I ween are they,
 For they bear a maiden with them, and she rideth against her will!'
 Yet the boy, tho' he spake with a man's tongue, as a god must account him still;

For he thought how Queen Herzeleide had told him that God was Light
And dwelleth in Light for ever; and so to his dazzled sight
This knight, in his shining armour in the glow of the summer's day,
Was the God of his mother's lesson, and he knelt him again to pray.
But the prince he spake full gently, 'Fain am I to do God's will,
And yet for no God I hold me, but a sinful mortal still.
Nay, wert thou more clear of vision, thou wouldst see, an thou sawest aright,
No Lord of the host of Heaven, but only a humble knight!'
'Knight?' quoth the boy in answer, 'Nay! I wot not what that may be,
Is thy strength not of God, but of knighthood, then I would such were given to me!'
'Then wend thy way to King Arthur, an thou camest unto his court,
A noble knight he would make thee, ashamed and afeared for naught,
For sure, now I look upon thee, thou com'st of a noble strain.'
Then his knights they turned their bridles, and gazed at the boy again.
Full well might they look and wonder, at the work that God's Hand had wrought,
For they say, who tell this story, that never could human thought
Have dreamed of aught so goodly, since ever the world began,
For of all men beloved by women, was there never so fair a man!
Loud they laughed as the boy spake further, 'Good knight, what may these be?
These rings that so close around thee, above and below I see.'
Then he handled, with curious finger, the armour the knight did bear,
His coat of mail close-linkèd as behovèd a knight to wear;
And he spake as he looked on the harness, 'My mother's maidens string
On their chains, and around their fingers, full many a shining ring,
But they cling not so close to each other as these rings that here I see,
I cannot force them asunder, what good are they then to thee?'
Then the prince drew forth from its scabbard his shining blade so keen,
'Now see, he who fights against me, must withstand my sword I ween,
And lest he, on his part, should slay me, it is fit that with mail and shield,
I ward me against his spear-thrusts, and the blows that his arm may wield.'
Swiftly the lad made answer, 'Little good would it do the deer
An their coats were e'en such as thine is, they would fall still beneath my spear.'
Full wroth were the knights and scornful that their lord thus long had talked
With this lad with the face of an angel, and the speech as of one distraught;
Then the prince he spake full gently, 'God keep thee in His good grace,
I would that my shield's bright mirror might show me as fair a face!
Nay, an the Giver of all gifts but gave thee wit enow
To match with a mien so goodly, full rich wert thou then I trow!
May He keep all sorrow from thee, and thy life be a summer's day—'
And with that he turned his bridle, and wended once more his way.
Then adown the woodland pathway they rode, till they came full soon
Where the carles of Queen Herzeleide toiled hard thro' the sultry noon:
The fields must they plough and harrow, if a harvest they hoped to reap,
So they goaded the patient oxen to their toil on the hillside steep.
Then the prince he gave them 'Good-morrow,' and asked if there passed that way
A maiden in need and sorrow? and they dared not to say him nay;
But they answered him e'en as he prayed them, and they spake 'Yea, at early morn
Two knights and a maiden passed here, and the maiden, she wept forlorn,
And the knights as they rode beside her, spurred ever her flying steed.'
Then the prince knew his foe, Meljakanz, and his wrath waxed hot indeed,
On his tracks he followed swiftly, and they who this venture tell,
Say he won back in fight the maiden ere the shadows of evening fell.
But sore were the queen's folk troubled that the heroes had chanced that way,
And they spake, 'God forbid that our queen's son fall in with these knights to-day!
An he chances to light upon them in the pride of their warlike gear,

It will anger full sore our mistress if by hap she the tale should hear:
 And ill-luck will it bring upon us that, ere ever the dawn of day,
 With us while his mother slumbered, to the woods he stole away!
 Little recked the boy of their trouble as he chased the flying deer,
 And shouted in youthful gladness, as they fell before his spear
 Then homeward he sped to his mother, but ere he his tale might tell
 She was smitten with deadly terror, and low at his feet she fell.
 Then soon as Queen Herzeleide found hearing and speech once more
 Her boy was she fain to question tho' her heart it misgave her sore;
 'Who spake to thee, son, of knighthood? What knowest thou of such-like rede?'
 'I met in the woods, sweet mother, four men I deemed gods indeed,
 So light were they all and shining, God Himself ne'er could brighter be,
 And of knighthood they spake and King Arthur, who might well make a knight of me!
 Then her sorrow of old-time wakened, and the queen in her heart she sought
 For some cunning wile of woman, that her boy from his will be brought.
 When the simple lad and gallant would crave from her hand a steed,
 Tho' heavy her heart, she bethought her in naught to gainsay his need,
 'Yet not as he asks will I give him, no mother's gifts be mine,
 But ever the worst and the meanest that my skill may aye divine.'
 And she thought her, Queen Herzeleide, 'Many folk thro' the world shall fare
 Who love mocking—On his fair body my son shall a Fool's dress wear,
 Then sure when the mockers see him, and to scoff at his garb are fain,
 An he at their hands be smitten, then he cometh to me again!'
 Alas! for a woman's cunning, and the cruelty of mother's love,
 She chose from her stores a sackcloth, the coarsest that might be wove,
 And a garment of this she made him that should reach e'en unto his knee;
 For his sunny hair such covering as on fools men are wont to see;
 And instead of hose she bound him on his limbs so strong and fair
 Leggings of undressed calf-skin—And all wept who beheld him there.
 Then his mother with forethought bade him to tarry till morning light,
 'Nor from hence would I have thee journey till my rede thou hast heard aright—
*'Keep thou ever from paths untrodden and ford not the darkling stream,
 Where the waters flow clear and limpid, there safe is the ford I ween.
 And be ever fair and courteous, greet all men who pass thy way.
 If a wise man old and grey-headed would teach thee, as well he may,
 All courteous ways and fitting, as his word so shall be thy deed,
 Nor wax wroth if by whiles he chide thee, but give to my words good heed.
 And one thing, my son, would I tell thee, canst thou win from a maid her ring
 And her greeting fair, thou shalt take them, and sorrow hath lost her sting!
 If a kiss from her lips she will give thee, and thine arms shall the maid enfold,
 Be she pure and true thou art blessèd, and thy strength shall wax high and bold!'*
 'And hearken my son, a proud knight, Lâhelein, do men call his name,
 From thy princes two lands hath wrested, else from them couldst thou tribute claim.
 And Waleis they are and Norgals—and one of thy princes brave,
 Turkentals, hath he slain, and thy people he hath smitten and doth enslave.'
 'For such wrong will I vengeance, mother, if vengeance be here God's will,
 Be he never so strong with my javelin I think me to wound him still.'
 Then e'en at the daylight's dawning the boy would no longer stay,
 For the thought of King Arthur's glory yet heavy upon him lay.
 Then Queen Herzeleide kissed him, and she sped swift his steed behind,
 And the sorrow of sorrows smote her when her boy she no more might find.
 (Hence he rode and what heart rejoiceth?) Then the queen from all falsehood free,
 Fell low on the earth, and grief tare her till death must her portion be!
 Yet I wot that her death so faithful it hath saved her from pains of Hell,
 And to be of such son the mother, it repayeth all anguish well!

Thus she, the root of all goodness whence humility's flower might blow,
Herself on a pilgrimage wended that a goodly goal should know.
Woe worth us! that none of their children should live still, to hand us down
In these days when we look on falsehood their honour and fair renown.
And therefore shall faithful women wish well to this lad so bold,
Who rideth fair ventures seeking, whose journey ye now behold!
Then the gallant lad rode onward on his way toward Briziljan's wood,
And he came to a rippling streamlet, and a cock well might wade that flood!
And flowers in the grass were blooming, yet so darkling ran the wave
That the lad he thought not to ford it; but as wit the counsel gave,
So he followed its course thro' the daylight, and he passed as he could the night,
Till he saw once more the morning, and he came to a fair ford bright.
On the further side was a meadow, and a tent decked the grass so green,
And tall was the tent wide-spreading, and riches thereon were seen;
'Twas of samite of threefold colours, on the seams lay fair ribbons wide,
And a leathern covering hung there, 'gainst the rain-cloud to guard its pride.
('Twas Duke Orilus of Lalande, whose wife he beneath it found—
She lay there in peaceful slumber with riches happed fair around,
A Duchess she was, well worthy the love of a gallant knight,
And the venture it tells that Jeschuté was the name of that lady bright)
Softly the princess slumbered,—yet weapons of love she bore;
A mouth so red and glowing, that a knight's heart had wounded sore,
And e'en as she slept they parted asunder, her lips so bright,
That the fire of love had kindled, (fit venture for gallant knight)
And even as ivory snow-white, and little, and close the row
Of the teeth that gleamed white betwixt them—methinks that a man were slow
To use himself to such kisses from a mouth that all men might praise—
I wot that so fair a guerdon but seldom hath crowned my days!
A covering of richest sable over foot and knee was thrown,
(For the heat she aside hath cast it, whom her lord had thus left alone)
And her form it was fairly fashioned, and wrought by a skilful hand,
Since 'twas God Himself in His wisdom who so fair a work had planned.
And long was her arm and rounded: on her snow-white hand a ring
Gleamed golden, and when he saw it the lad to her side did spring;
For had not his mother told him such jewels were the guerdon fair
That a knight well might crave? and he thought him he fain would such token bear!
Then the lady awoke in terror as his clasp on her white arm fell,
And gazed in startled wonder and wrath as beseeemed her well;
'Who is it, who thus would shame me? Nay, sir, thou art all too free!
Go, choose thee some fairer maiden, my favours are not for thee!'
In vain might she weep and bewail her; he asked not her yea, or nay,
But took from her lips unwilling the kiss she would fain gainsay;
And the ring of gold from her finger with ungentle hand he'd take,
And the clasp that her shift had fastened from the garment he roughly brake:
In vain were her tears and struggles, she was but a woman still,
And his strength was to hers as an army, perforce must she do his will.
Then the lad spake aloud, he hungered, from his hand was the lady free,
And she quoth, 'Of a truth 'twere better thou shouldst not make meal of me!
If thou wert but a little wiser thou wouldst choose thee some other meat,
There stand bread and wine, and two game-birds, of them mayst thou freely eat,
Methinks when my maiden brought them, 'twas scarcely of thee she thought!'
Then he asked not where sat the hostess, but he ate e'en as hunger taught,
And he drank his fill; and the lady she deemed all too long his stay,
For she thought him bereft of his senses, and she wished he were well away,
And for fear and shame the sweat-drops stood thickly upon her brow—

And she spake, 'Thou my ring shalt give me, and the clasp thou didst take but now,
 And get thee away, if he cometh, my husband, then shalt thou bear
 The weight of his wrath, and I think me thou wouldst then wish thyself elsewhere!'

Quoth the noble youth, 'What care I how fierce thy lord's wrath may be?
 If my presence doth shame thine honour, then from hence will I swiftly flee.'
 And he stepped to the bedside boldly, and kissed her as there she lay,
 Tho' little it pleased the Duchess, and without leave he rode away;
 And he spake a word of parting as he vaulted upon his steed,
 'God have thee in His safe keeping, so my mother she gave me rede.'
 Then the lad he was glad of his booty, and thus did he ride a while—
 Methinks there was little lacking that from hence he had gone a mile,
 Ere he came of whom I would tell you: on the dew he the tracks might see
 Of one who had sought his lady—The tent-ropes displaced should be
 Where the lad thro' the grass had ridden; then the gallant Duke and proud
 Found his lady within in sorrow, and Orilus spake aloud,
 'Alas! for the service done thee—for smitten and put to shame
 Is the crown of my knightly honour, since another thy love can claim!'

Then little, alas! might it profit that with streaming eyes she swore
 No lover had she save her husband,—he would hearken her tale no more.
 Then she spake in her fear and anguish, 'Twas a *fool*, he who came to me,
 And yet tho' a fool, of all men I wot he may fairest be!
 My ring and my clasp gold-gleaming, he took them against my will!'

'Nay, I doubt not so well he pleased thee, thou didst grant him more favours still,'
 'Now, God forbid! for his fool's garb and his javelin were e'en too near,
 It shameth us both, my husband, such words from thy lips to hear!
 Are *queens* wont to love thus lowly, that thou speakest such words of me?
 Thou wrongest our royal breeding, when thou deemest such things may be!'

Then the Duke spake, 'This shame, O lady! alone hast thou won from me,
 Thou dost call thyself *Queen* no longer; tho' thy title shall *Duchess* be
 Little good hath that bargain brought me—So bold shall my manhood be,
 That thy brother, King Lac's son Erec, for that cause beareth hate to thee:
 He is wise, and right well he knoweth that my fame so high shall stand
 That nothing shall stain mine honour, save at Prurein when his right hand
 In knightly joust once felled me, but that have I paid right well,
 In a joust at Karnant I smote him, and behind his steed he fell,
 And his pledge did he yield unto me,—thro' his shield I thy token bare,
 I thought not, my wife Jeschuté, with *another* thy love to share!'

'Thou mayst also well assure thee that the son of King Gandein,
 Proud Galoes, once lay lifeless before this arm of mine;
 And thou thyself wast witness when the Knight Plihopleheri
 Rode swift in a joust against me, nor his strife it hath passed me by,
 My spear from the saddle thrust him that his charger he sat no more;
 Yea, great was the fame that I won me by my prowess in days of yore,
 Many knights have I borne from their chargers,—yet it profiteth not I ween,
 Nor outweigheth the bitter shaming that thro' thee hath my portion been!'

And with reason good do they hate me, those knights of the Table Round,
 Since eight of their bravest champions have I borne unto the ground,
 And many fair maidens saw it, when at Kanedig fierce we fought
 For the hawk; there was I the victor, and my hand fame to thee hath brought
 And that didst thou see with King Arthur—At his court doth she dwell to-day,
 My sister, sweet Kunnewaaré, and grave is her mien alway,
 For her lips may not move to laughter till the day that her eyes shall light
 On him who of all shall be reckoned the fairest and bravest knight.
 Would he come unto me, that hero! Ah! then should a strife be seen
 As to-day in the early morning already my lot hath been.

I have fought, and a prince hath suffered, for joust he toward me sped,
 But my spear-point so sorely smote him that he lay there before me, dead!
 'Well I know that in righteous anger for a lesser sin than thine
 Full many had slain the sinner, but I would not such deed were mine!
 For the service of knightly honour that to thee I had offered fair,
 Henceforth shalt thou know but lacking; nor thy need do I think to spare—
 No more with thy white arms circled in love and in peace I'll lie,
 Those golden days of love's glory have faded and passed us by,
 But pale be thy mouth so rosy, and tear-dimmed thy shining eyes,
 For joy shall be put far from thee, and thy heart's songs be turned to sighs!
 Then sadly she looked upon him, that princess so fair and true,
 'May it be for the honour of knighthood what seemeth thee best to do,
 Wise art thou indeed and loyal, and I in thy power may be,
 And I know well that heavy sorrow and pain thou canst bring on me:
 To the ordeal, I prithee, put me, and do this for all women's sake,
 Thereafter, an I be guilty, for my sin do thou vengeance take!
 If another's hand shall slay me, (for *thee* were such deed un-meet)
 Then gladly I'll die—Dost thou scorn me? then welcome is death, and sweet!
 Then he broke out in bitter anger, 'If thy pride be still so great,
 It is meet I should meekness teach thee, tho' the lesson be all too late—
 No more shall we be companions, together no more we'll eat;
 Be our marriage couch forgotten and the hours of communion sweet.
 This garment in which I found thee thy only robe shall be,
 And instead of jewelled bridle hempen twist will I give to thee;
 Thy steed be the guest of hunger, and thy saddle once decked so fair
 Shall be robbed of its goodly trappings!' and with hasty hand he tare
 The samite adown, and he brake it, the saddle she rode erewhile,
 (Nor her gentle ways and seemly might his angry wrath beguile)
 With a hempen cord he bound it—Too soon had she won his hate!
 As he did this he spake, 'Now Lady, 'tis best we no longer wait,
 Could I reach him who shared thy favours, then fulfilled were my heart's desire,
 The venture I'd face, though as dragon he were breathing forth flames and fire!
 Then with weeping instead of laughter she passed from out the tent
 That lady so rich in sorrow, and sadly her way she went;
 Yet more than she mourned her shaming she wept her lord's grief, I ween,
 His sorrow so sorely moved her, e'en death would have lighter been.
 Now of true heart shall ye bemoan her who thus did sore anguish know,
 And tho' hatred I won from all women, still I'd mourn for Jeschuté's woe!
 So rode they upon the traces of the lad who before them fled,
 And, dauntless, he little thought him how a foeman behind him sped,
 But whoever his eyes might light on, as his pathway they drew anear,
 He gave to him kindly greeting, 'Thus bade me my mother dear!
 Thus rode he, our lad so foolish, adown a mountain side,
 When a woman's voice before him from amid the rocks loud cried;
 'Twas a cry of heartfelt sorrow, for her joy was in ruins laid—
 Then swift rode the lad towards her,—Now hear what she did, this maid:
 She tore, the maid Siguné, her plaits of long brown hair
 From out her head thro' sorrow; and the lad he beheld her there,
 And he saw Schionatulander, the prince, on her knee lie dead,
 And the maiden she wailed above him, and her joy had for ever fled.
 ('If sad be their mien or joyful, my mother she bade me still
 Greet all men, whoe'er might meet me) God keep thee from greater ill,
 For in sooth a sorry treasure have I found on thy knee to-day!
 Who hath wounded this knight?' (For an answer the lad he would press alway)
 'Did one with a javelin slay him? For Lady, he sure is dead;

Wilt thou tell me naught? Who hath slain him? If he none too far hath fled
 Methinks I might overtake him, for gladly with him I'd fight!
 Then the lad he laid hold on his quiver wherein lay the javelins bright,
 And still in his hand tight claspèd, the tokens twain he bore
 Which he in his thoughtless folly erewhile from Jeschuté tore.
 Had he known the courtly customs with his father's life in-bound,
 His shield were better smitten when the duchess alone he found
 Who thro' him must suffer sorrow—for more than a whole year long,
 Her husband withheld his favour, tho' in sooth did he do her wrong.
 Now list to this maid Siguné who her grief would bemoan as meet,
 She spake to the lad, 'Thou art courteous, all hail! to thy youth so sweet,
 And thy face so fair; yea blessèd thy lot shall hereafter be!
 No javelin pierced this hero, but slain in a joust was he—
 From truth wast thou born who truly for another's woe can grieve!
 Then his name she was fain to hearken, ere the lad her side might leave,
 And she spake, God with skill had wrought him—But his answer was naught but this,
 'At home all who know me call me '*Bon fils, Cher fils, Beau fils!*'
 Ere ever the word was spoken, the maiden she knew his name—
 Now hearken aright his title, that hereafter ye own his fame
 Who is hero of this my venture, who now standeth the maid beside—
 And her red lips they spake unfaltering, 'Thou art *Parzival*,' she cried,
 And thy name it shall mean '*to pierce thro'*,' for thy mother's faithful heart
 With furrow of grief was riven when she from her lord must part:
 And I speak not that those shouldst vaunt thee; thy mother my aunt shall be,
 And in truth, with no guile of falsehood, thy race will I tell to thee!
 'An Angevin was thy father, thy mother of fair Waleis,
 And I know for a truth thy birthplace was the city of Kanvoleis;
 And thou art the King of Norgals, and there in the citadel
 As king shalt thou bear the sceptre and crown as beseems thee well.
 For thy sake was he slain, this hero, who thy kingdom for thee would guard,
 His truth it hath faltered never, tho' in death did he find reward.
 Two brothers have wrought thee evil, two kingdoms from thee have reft,
 And Orilus this thy kinsman in a joust hath lifeless left.
 And me too hath he left in sorrow—He served me nor thought it shame,
 This prince of thy land, where my childhood did thy mother's tending claim.
 Now fair and sweet my cousin wouldst thou hear how he met his end?
 'Twas the fair wove leash of a brachet that brought sorrow unto my friend—
 He hath served us twain, in our service hath he won him but death alone,
 And I, I have won but sorrow, and henceforth for his death make moan,
 For scant of wit was I surely, that I gave not my love afore—
 So God hath my gladness shattered, and the dead I love evermore!
 Then he spake, 'I must mourn, O cousin, thy grief, and my bitter wrong,
 Of a truth till I may avenge them the time seemeth over-long!
 Then straight would he ride to battle, but the way did she falsely show,
 For she feared were he slain then henceforward yet sorer should wax her woe.
 But a road he found that led him straightway to the Breton's land,
 And smooth and wide was that highway—An there met him on either hand
 Afoot or ahorse a merchant or knight, he would greet them still,
 For so was his mother's counsel; and she spake with no thought of ill.
 But great weariness o'ertook him, as darkened the eventide,
 And a house that was none too stately the youth in his folly spied.
 'Twas a churl he who sat within it, discourteous by birth and low,
 (A fisherman he, little kindness might one at his hand e'er know)
 Then the lad drew rein for he hungered, and craved of him drink and meat.
 But the host quoth, 'Nay, not a half-loaf shalt thou have at mine hand to eat

In thirty years; he who waiteth, in the gifts of mine hand to share,
 O'er-long shall delay his journey—For none but myself I care,
 Thereafter perchance for my children—Thou comest not here to-day,
 Hadst thou money or pledge 'twere other, then thine host would I be straightway!
 Then Jeschuté's clasp all golden the lad he would bid him take,
 And soon as the peasant saw it, with smiling mouth he spake,
 'Wilt thou stay here, sweet lad? then due honour be thy portion from all within—'
 'Wilt thou feed me to-night and to-morrow wilt help me the way to win
 To King Arthur (for well I love him) then thyself mayst keep the gold!'
 'Yea, that will I do,' quoth the peasant, 'for ne'er might mine eyes behold
 A face and form so comely—I will thee, as a marvel, bring
 To the court, and the good Round Table, and the face of the noble king!'
 So the lad thro' the night abode there, and ere ever the dawn of day
 He roused himself full eager to get on his onward way,
 And the fisher, he made him ready, and before the lad he ran,
 And the boy he rode behind him, and swift were both steed and man.
 (Herr Hartmann von Aue, and thy lady, the queenly Guinevere,
 And thy gallant lord, King Arthur, a guest do I bring ye here;
 No tool is he for your mocking, nay, never a harp or lute,
 Ye shall choose ye some other plaything, such as courtesy well doth suit;
 Else will I thy lady Enid, and her mother Karnafite
 Pass under the mill, and their honour with bitter scorn I'll smite—
 Tho' I tune my song to mocking, and thy lips with mockery seal,
 Yet here will I guard my hero lest thy scorn he perchance should feel!)
 When the lad with his guide so humble to the city walls drew near,
 And Nantes might be well discernèd in the morning light so clear,
 'God keep thee, boy,' said the fisher, 'thou seest where thou must ride.'
 Quoth the lad yet scant in knowledge, 'Yet nearer must thou be guide!'
 'Nay, nay, so proud as these court-folk, such folly be far from me,
 An' a peasant came nigh unto them, his welcome would sorry be!'
 So alone the lad rode onward o'er a plain that was none too wide,
 And the flowers stood fair around him and blossomed on every side,
 No Kurwenal was his teacher and of courtesy knew he naught—
 They know it not, the untravelled, till the world hath wisdom taught—
 Of hempen twist his bridle, and feeble and faint his steed,
 And oft it fell, as stumbling it went o'er the flowery mead.
 And nowhere upon his saddle fair leather and new was seen;
 And of samite fair and ermine full great his lack had been.
 No mantle clasp he needed, nor knightly garb he wore,
 Of blazoned coat or surcoat; his javelin alone he bore.
 He whose deeds were praised of all men, his father so brave and wise,
 Was robed in far other fashion on the carpet 'fore Kanvoleis!
 He who ne'er felt the sweat of terror, to him did a knight draw near;
 Then he greeted him, 'May God keep thee! thus bade me my mother dear.'
 'God reward thee, lad, and thy mother,' swift answer the knight would bring,
 (Uther Pendragon reared him, he was cousin unto the king,
 And unto the land of Bretagne did the self-same knight lay claim)
 He was Ither of Gaheviess, 'The Red Knight' they called his name.
 All dazzling red was his armour, the eye from its glow gleamed red;
 Red was his horse swift-footed, and the plumes that should deck its head,
 Of samite red its covering; redder than flame his shield;
 Fair-fashioned and red his surcoat; and the spear that his hand would wield
 Was red, yea, the shaft and the iron; and red at the knight's desire
 Was his sword, yet the blade's fair keenness was not dimmed by the raging fire.
 And the King of Cumberland, stately, in his mailèd hand did hold

A goblet, with skill engraven, and wrought of the good red gold—
 From the Table Round had he reft it—All red was his shining hair
 Yet white was his skin, and kindly his speech to the lad and fair.
 'Now hail to thy fair young body, that in sooth a true woman bare,
 Yea, blessed is she thy mother! Ne'er saw I a face so fair,
 And the light of thine eyes, I think me, is kindled by love alone,
 And Love shall in thee be victor, as by thee Love is overthrown!
 And in thee is the joy of woman, whose bliss finds in thee its goal,
 And for thee shall the load of sorrow weigh heavy upon the soul—
 Now do me this grace I pray thee, an thou wend thee unto the town
 Bear greeting from me to King Arthur, and his heroes of high renown,
 And say that no fleeting vision am I who now speak with thee,
 But here I abide, and await him who thinketh to joust with me!'
 'And never a man will wonder: to the Table Round I came
 And there, in the heroes' presence to my kingdom would I lay claim,
 And with hasty hand I raised it, this cup, and the wine out-poured
 The robes of the queen besprinkled, as she sat there beside her lord.
 This I did as the custom olden of one who would claim his right
 For better I thought the wine-cup, than the straw-wisp all alight,
 For its smoke perchance had soiled me, thus I chose it not' spake the king,
 'Nor for robbery rode I hither, my crown doth forbid such thing—
 Say thou to the queen that the wine-drops, they fell on her 'gainst my will
 Where those heroes sit, nor remember, nor their knighthood as meet fulfil.
 Whether kings they shall be or princes o'er-long doth he thirst their king!
 This cup, why delay to fetch it? Their fame it hath taken wing!'
 Then the lad spake, 'I'll bear thy message, yea, e'en as thou biddest me.'
 And then unto Nantes fair city he gat him right speedily,
 And many a youth they followed to the court of the palace fair,
 And 'twas filled with a motley gathering, and they thronged him and pressed him there.
 Then Iwanet sprang from out them, and this youth from falsehood free
 He gave him a kindly greeting, and he proffered him company.
 And the lad he quoth, 'God keep thee, (so my mother she bade me speak
 Ere yet from home I wended) King Arthur I fain would seek
 But here see I full many an Arthur! Who of all these shall make me knight?'
 Then Iwanet laughed loud 'I will show thee, not yet hast thou seen the right!'
 To the Table Round he led him where sat the heroes all
 And as best he could for the tumult cried the lad thro' the lofty hall,
 'God keep ye all ye heroes! I greet ye both queen and king,
 For thus did my mother bid me fair greeting to ye to bring.
 And all who have won by their valour at the Table Round a seat
 Ye gallant knights and heroes, ye too did she bid me greet!
 But in one thing my skill doth fail me, who is host here I may not know;
 To him do I bear a message from a knight who all red doth glow,
 He waiteth without the portal (methinks he is fain to fight)
 That he spilt o'er the queen the wine-cup that sorely doth grieve the knight—
 Ah! if I his gear so goodly from the king's hand as gift might take,
 In sooth were I rich in gladness—so knightly and fair its make!'
 Thus spake the youth gay and careless, and the courtiers they thronged around
 And hither and thither pressed him till scarce might he stand his ground:
 And well did they look upon him, for each for himself might see
 That never in man or maiden might the fruit of love fairer be.
 And in truth it was no ill working that in Parzival God had wrought,
 In whom never a sight of terror had wakened of fear a thought.
 Thus they brought him before King Arthur, he whom God for a wonder chose,
 And no man might bear him hatred—Then the queen from her seat arose

And she gazed for a space upon him ere she passed from out the hall
 Where the wine from the golden goblet perforce on her robes must fall.
 Then Arthur he looked upon him—To the simple youth he spake,
 'Now lad to thy kindly greeting a kindly answer take,
 For this would I do thee service, yea with body alike and land;
 This I speak of a true heart truly, so my will doth toward thee stand!'
 'Would to God that were true! Now I think me it well-nigh a year shall be
 That I fain would be knight, lacking knighthood all else seemeth ill to me!
 Now make thou no more delaying, be knighthood my lot straightway.'
 Quoth the king, 'I were fain to do so if worth fail me not alway,
 So noble art thou to look on; and goodly gifts and rare
 Would I give thee; to do thee service I'll naught of my treasure spare.
 Yea, loath had I been to refuse thee, wait but for to-morrow's light,
 And I myself will dower thee with all that befits a knight.'
 The lad like a bird new caged, he shook himself to and fro,
 And he quoth, 'For naught do I ask thee! But that knight who as fire doth glow
 If thou givest me not his armour no gift will I take from thee,
 My *mother* will not withhold it—For a queen shall she surely be.'
 Then Arthur he quoth, 'That armour so gallant a knight doth wear
 That to give thee a gift so goodly methinks I may hardly dare.
 And guiltless I live in sorrow since his homage I must forego,
 Ither he is of Gaheviess; thro' my joy hath he wrought me woe.'
 'Now my King sure it were ungracious to say to his pleading nay,
 Thou shalt give him what he desireth, nor think it too great,' quoth Kay,
 'Let him forth to the plain; bid him bring thee the cup if it be thy will!
 Here hast thou the whip, there the top is, let the child have of sport his fill.
 The women, forsooth, will praise him, and it seemeth good to me
 He should learn to take blows an he gives them, many such will his portion be.
 For the life of the twain what care I? Each of us needs must have his day,
 If thy dogs for the spoil shall hunger, thou must e'en give thy dogs their way.'
 'I were loath to refuse his pleading, yet I feared lest he here be slain,
 And to knighthood I fain had helped him.' Thus Arthur he spake again.
 Thus the lad won the gift he craved for, which many perforce must rue,
 And young and old they followed, as forth from the hall he flew.
 By the hand would Iwanet lead him, 'fore a bower that was none too high,
 And backward and forward turning the lad gazed with eager eye.
 And the bower was so low that within it the lad he both heard and saw,
 And therefrom did he win a sorrow that vexed him with torment sore.
 The queen from her bower window to look on the sight was fain,
 And her knights and maidens round her they gazed and they gazed again.
 And the maiden Kunnewaaré she sat there, the fair and proud,
 And never, that man might wot of, had she laughed or low or loud.
 For never she vowed, an she died first, would she laugh ere her eyes might see
 That knight, who of knights the bravest or was, or henceforth should be.
 As the lad rode beneath the window she brake into laughter sweet,
 And her back was sore from the guerdon—reward for a maid unmeet!
 For Kay the Seneschal seized her, the maiden of fair Lalande,
 By her waving hair, and the tresses he wound fast around his hand,
 Without a band he bound her—Tho' never an oath she sware
 His staff he laid unknighly on her maiden shoulders fair,
 And ere ever the sound of the smiting on the ear had died away
 Thro' white skin and royal raiment had he wounded the maid that day.
 And thus did he speak in his folly, 'Now hast thou thine own fair fame
 Cast aside, and I wot thou hast done it to thine own mending shame!
 Now see, e'en in flight have I caught it, and I bring it to thee once more

In such wise thou mayst well remember, and be e'en in the memory sore:
 For I wot well unto King Arthur, to his court and his palace hall
 Many gallant men have ridden, yet hast thou despised them all,
 And ne'er hast thou smiled upon them—And now doth thy laughter ring
 For one knowing naught of knighthood! Unseemly I deem this thing!
 Now whate'er might be done in anger I wot well no king's decree
 Had bid him thus smite the maiden; and her friends mourned her bitterly.
 (Might she bear knightly shield and armour it had helped not this sore disgrace,
 Discourteous the blows were smitten.) She came of a royal race,
 Had her gallant brothers seen it, Lâhelein and Orilus
 Far fewer blows had fallen; she ne'er had been smitten thus.
 Now Sir Antanor the Silent, who thro' silence a fool was thought,
 (His speech and the maiden's laughter on a self-same thread were wrought)
 For never a word would he utter till she laughed whom Kay thus did smite,
 As clear rang the maiden's laughter, aloud spake the silent knight,
 'Now here before God I tell thee, Kunnewaaré of fair Lalande
 Thou hast wronged for that lad, and thy guerdon awaiteth thee at his hand,
 Nor so weak shall he be, nor so foolish, but he turneth thy bliss to bale!
 'And thy speech thou hast found but to threaten for joy shall it naught avail.
 His food would he make full bitter.—Kay smote him upon the ear
 With his fist till naught but a singing and a whispering might he hear.
 And Parzival saw the sorrow of the maiden and Antanor,
 And his heart was hot for their shaming, and grief for their sake he bore,
 And he grasped his javelin tightly, but the throng pressed so close around
 That perforce the dart must he lower, lest some other aim it found.
 Thus alone from the court of King Arthur rode the son of Gamuret,
 And he came to the plain where the Red Knight his foeman awaited yet;
 And he bare unto him the tidings how in Nantes was there never a knight
 Whose heart yet yearned for jousting, or who lusted with him to fight.
 'But a gift King Arthur gave me—I spake as thou saidst before,
 That without thy will had it chanced thee the wine o'er the queen to pour,
 Thy discourtesy sorely vexed thee—They think not to fight with thee.
 Now give me the steed thou ridest, and thine harness give thou to me,
 They were given me in the palace, therein shall I be a knight,
 Wouldst withhold them, I will not greet thee—Yield thou what is mine of right!
 Then the King of Cumberland answered, 'If Arthur hath given to thee
 Mine armour, my *life* he gave thee, if that life thou canst take from me,
 So well doth he love his kinsmen! Hath he known thee before to-day,
 That so swiftly the service done him with such guerdon he would repay?'
 'I may win what I will I trow me, of a sooth had he given me more;
 Now leave thou thy claim on his kingdom—'Tis time I a knight's shield bore
 For *squire* will I be no longer!' He laid on the rein his hand
 'Thou art Lâhelein, so I think me, who hath taken from me my land!'
 Then the knight he turned his spear-shaft, and he struck with so true a blow
 That the lad and his sorry charger on the meadow he laid them low,
 And the hero was swift in his anger, and he smote with a will so good
 That there where the spear-shaft struck him there sprang forth bright drops of blood.
 Then Parzival sprang up swiftly and stood wrathful upon his feet
 And he grasped his javelin firmly—Where the helm and the visor meet
 And betwixt the twain is an opening, there the javelin swiftly sped
 And thro' eye and neck it struck him, and the knight on the plain lay dead.
 Fierce foe had he been to falsehood; women's sighs, true hearts wounded sore,
 Were the fruit of his death, and with tear-drops must many an eye run o'er.
 And they whom his love made joyful their gladness asunder brake,
 And their joy to the goal of sorrow o'er a rough road its way must take.

Then Parzival in his folly turned the dead knight o'er and o'er,
For fain would he loose his armour, yet was lacking the needful lore.
He fingered both helm and corslet with his bare white hands alone,
Yet the fastening he failed to loosen, nor with force might they be undone
Tho' oft and again he tried them, who in wisdom was all untaught.
Then the horses they neighed so loudly that the sound on the breeze was brought
To Iwanet's ear, and he heard them, by the city moat he stood,
(To Queen Guinevere was he kinsman, and he did to her service good)
He heard the cry of the horses, but naught of the riders saw,
As his true heart would give him counsel, Parzival did he seek once more.
And Ither lay dead; and his slayer by his folly was vexed amain—
Then swiftly he sprang to aid him, and Parzival thanks must gain
For the honour he here had won him o'er the hero of Cumberland:
'God reward thee, but give me counsel for skill here doth fail mine hand,
How best may I loose this armour which myself I were fain to wear?'
'Such lore I right well may teach thee,' quoth Iwanet the proud and fair,
So the armour was reft from the dead man, 'fore Nantes on the grassy plain,
And they did it upon the living, o'er whose dealings did folly reign.
Quoth Iwanet, 'These leather leggings fit not with the mailèd gear,
As a *knight* shalt thou now be clothèd,' and the lad deemed it ill to hear;
Quoth Parzival, 'What my mother aforetime hath given me
That cometh not from my body, or for good or for ill it be!'
And much did Iwanet marvel, for clever was he i' troth,
Yet he followed perforce his bidding, nor waxed at his folly wroth.
And he drew above the leggings the hosen of shining mail,
Nor the spurs with red gold in-wroughten should unto the harness fail,
And of silk and gold the laces, nor leather might there be found.
Ere he gave unto him the corslet he bound him with greaves around,
And tho' o'er-long Parzival deemed it yet the time was swiftly sped,
Ere in knightly armour shining he clad him from foot to head.
Then the lad would have ta'en his quiver, but Iwanet he spake out free,
'Nay, no javelin will I give thee, unknighly such arms shall be!'
Then he girt the sharp sword around him, and he showed how to draw the blade,
And he bade him ne'er fly in battle, nor in conflict to be dismayed.
Then nearer he led unto him the charger the dead knight rode,
And 'twas tall and strong, yet the saddle the youth with one spring bestrode,
He recked not the weight of his armour, and of stirrups had little need—
E'en to-day do men speak of his swiftness, and the fame of his mighty deeds.
Nor o'er-much did Iwanet think it to teach him with fitting skill
To hold his shield and to guard him, while he wrought to his foeman ill;
And a spear in his hand he gave him—But Parzival turned aside,
'Nay, nay, what good may that do me?' 'If a joust one with thee would ride
Thou shalt on thy foeman break it, perchance drive it thro' his shield,
If thou doest that oft, 'fore the maidens will they praise thee for well-fought field.'
And this hath the venture told me,—Not in Maestricht, or e'en Cologne
Might a painter so fair a picture as this lad and his steed have shown.
Then straightway he spake to Iwanet, 'My friend and companion dear,
The boon that I asked have I won me, of that art thou witness here.
My service bear thou to the city, to Arthur the noble king,
And mourn unto him my shaming—This cup thou again shalt bring,
And tell him a knight hath wronged me, since he smote that maiden fair
Who looked, and who laughed upon me, and grief for her grief I bear.
Nor hath it but lightly touched me, it hath pierced to my inmost heart
This maid's woe all undeservèd—Now do thou in her shame have part
Thro' the friendship that thou hast shown me! God keep thee in peace alway,

And watch o'er us twain, for I think me no longer I here may stay!'
And Ither the prince of Gaheviess on the plain had he lifeless left,
E'en in death was he fair to look on who was thus of fair life bereft.
If in joust by a spear-thrust pierced he thro' knighthood his death must gain
Who had mourned for the grief and the marvel? By a javelin he here was slain.
Then Iwanet he strewed above him a covering of blossoms bright,
And he smote the shaft of the javelin in the ground by the fallen knight,
And that lad so true and faithful, he pierced with the crimson blade
A bough of wood, and in this wise a cross o'er the dead man made.
Then he gat him again to the city, and the heavy tidings told;
And from many a trembling woman, and from many a hero bold
Rose the wail of love and of sorrow; and the dead would they fetch in state,
And the Host they bare before her, as the queen passed the city gate.
Then o'er Cumberland's prince and hero, who by Parzival's hand was slain,
Queen Guinevere spake in sorrow while her tear-drops they flowed amain,
'Alas! alas! for broken in twain is King Arthur's might,
For he whom the good Round Table accounted its bravest knight
Here slain before Nantes he lieth! His heritage did he claim
Where men gave him death for his guerdon—For naught marred his knightly fame;
Here long hath he dwelt among us in such wise that never an ear
The tale of a deed unknighly, or wrong he had done, might hear.
He held him afar from falsehood, to guile was he aye a foe;
The lock and the seal of knighthood all too soon must we bury low.
His heart wise in courteous wisdom, and steadfast as seal and sign,
Taught him ever the fairest counsel that a man's heart might aye divine,
Whereby with true love and courage a man woman's love may woo
And show manhood's truth—Fruit-bearing it seedeth itself anew
The plant of all woman's sorrow! From thy wounds grief shall ever grow—
So red was thy hair that the blossoms that bloom here thy corse below
Scarce redder may be with thy life-blood—All laughter hast thou forbid
To fair women, and joy and gladness by thy death are for ever hid.'
Thus Ither, beloved of all men, as a king in the grave was laid,—
With his life must he pay for his armour who taught sighing to many a maid,
Since Parzival in his folly for the harness his death had sought,
Hereafter, when he won wisdom, he scarcely such deed had wrought!
NOW this might ye mark in the charger, great labour it held as naught,
Were it hot, were it cold, no journey the sweat on its coat had brought;
It sped over stone or tree-trunk, and scarce was there need to draw
The girth by one hole the tighter if the knight for two days it bore.
So fully armed, in his folly yet further he rode that day
Than a wise man unarmed in two days if his steed he betimes would stay.
And ever it onward galloped, and but seldom would walk or trot,
How to check its speed by the bridle as yet Parzival knew not.
Then he saw the roof of a castle rise fair in the evening glow,
And the lad he thought in his folly that the towers from the earth must grow
Since the one roof bare so many—And he thought Arthur sowed such seed,
And he who could work such marvels were a holy man indeed!
Then he said, 'While at home I tarried ne'er looked I on woodland field
That a crop so rich and so stately in growth might ever yield;
I think me my mother's people their labour but little know,
For never too dry, I think me, is the soil where their seed they sow!'—
Now Gurnemanz of Grahaz of this mighty Burg was lord:
At his portal a spreading linden stood fair on the summer sward,
Nor too long nor too wide was the meadow, and the horse and the road they led
To where Parzival found him seated who of castle and land was head.

Now weariness sore constrained him, nor his shield might he rightly hold
But it backward and forward wavered as beseemed not a rider bold.
And Prince Gurnemanz sat all lonely, and the boughs of the linden tree
Gave shade as was meet to its master, the captain of courtesy—
And his life it fled from falsehood—Then e'en as should be his right
He gave to the guest fair welcome, and with him stood nor squire nor knight.
Then Parzival made him answer—In his folly he spake straightway,
'My mother bade me seek counsel from an old man with locks of grey;
For thy rede will I do thee service, for so did my mother speak!'
'If here thou art come for counsel, and aid at my lips would seek,
Thy favour thou still shalt leave me whatever my counsel be,
If thou wilt that thy prayer I hearken, and give rede as seem best to me!'
Then the prince cast a yearling falcon from his hand and aloft it flew,
And it winged its way to the castle, and its golden bells rang true,
'Twas a messenger; and the pages came swiftly in garments fair,
And he bade them to lead the guest in, and lodging as meet prepare;
And the lad he spake in his folly, 'My mother she told me true,
An thou follow an old man's counsel his rede shalt thou never rue!
And the pages they led him straightway where stood many a gallant knight,
And there in the castle courtyard from his steed did they bid him light.
Spake the youth, and he showed his folly, 'Tis a King who hath bidden me
Be a knight, and whate'er befall me on this charger my seat shall be.
My mother she bade me greet ye!' And mother they thanked and son,
(Both horse and man were wearied) then, the words of greeting done,
Full many a time they urged him, but it cost them many a thought
Ere the lad within the castle, and from off his steed they brought.
Then they led him to a chamber, and they prayed the stranger guest,
'Let us loose thine harness off thee, that thy wearied limbs find rest.'
But scarce had they loosed his armour when lo! there came to view
A garment e'en such as Fools wear, and leggings of calf-skin new;
Then startled and shamed they turned them, and they whispered each to all,
And with bated breath the tidings ran swift through the castle hall,
And the host for shame was speechless—But a knight spake in courtesy,
'Let that be as it may, one so noble mine eyes they might never see,
And Good Fortune hath looked upon him by his mien so high and fair—
Ah! he whom Love's light hath chosen, who bade him such garb to wear?
And it grieveth me sore to find thus on the World's Joy such poor attire.
Ah! well for the mother who bare him, she hath won her full heart's desire!
And his helmet is decked so costly; ere his harness from him we took
It became him well, and knightly and noble I ween his look,
And many a bruise and blood-stain the lad on his limbs doth bear.'
Quoth the host, 'Tis perchance a woman who bade him such garb to wear!'
'Nay, Sire, for so strange his bearing he would know not a maid to pray
To take from him knightly homage,—Tho' his face is so fair alway
It had fitted him well for Love's service.' Then the host spake, 'Tis best we see
This lad, in whose strange attiring a marvel for sure shall be!'
Then to Parzival they betook them, and they found that a wound he bare
From a spear that was never shattered, and the host for his hurts would care,
And so kindly I ween his tending that a father, whose heartfelt love
To his children, found no denial, his faith might no better prove.
And he washed his wounds and bound them, the prince, with his own right hand,
Ere forth to the hall he led him where the evening meal should stand.
And food the guest sore needed, and hungry was he alway,
From the house of the fisherman fasting had he ridden at break of day,
And his wound and the heavy harness which he before Nantes had won

Wrought him weariness sore and hunger ere ever the ride was done.
 For from Arthur the King of the Bretons the whole day he needs must ride,
 Nor his fast at the Court had broken, and now it was eventide.
 Then the host bade him eat at his table, and Parzival did his will,
 And the food it swiftly vanished, as if one would a manger fill!
 And Gurnemanz was well pleasèd, and ever the lad did pray
 To eat as he would, and his hunger and weariness put away.
 When 'twas time, and the meal was ended, 'Now weary art thou, I ween,'
 Quoth the host to his guest, 'If this morning betimes thou a-foot hast been?'
 'God knoweth my mother slumbered, so early she ne'er doth wake.'
 Then the host he laughed, and he led him where rest he right well might take,
 And he bade him disrobe, tho' unwilling, he needs must—An ermine fair
 They cast o'er his naked body,—fairer fruit never woman bare!
 By weariness taught to slumber, but seldom throughout the night
 On his other side did he turn him, he might well wait the morning light.
 Then the prince he bade his servants ere ever 'twas middle day,
 A bath, as was meet, make ready by the couch where the young knight lay,
 And roses they threw within it—And tho' he no call might hear
 The guest awoke from his slumbers, and he stepped in the waters clear.
 I know not who sent them hither, but maidens richly dressed,
 Lovely and sweet to look on, all courteous sought the guest,
 They washed his wounds and bound them with their hands so soft and white,
 (Nor should this o'er strange have seemed him who was reft of wisdom's might)
 And both ease he felt and gladness, nor his folly they made him rue—
 Thus these fair and gentle maidens they tended the lad anew,
 And they spake 'twixt themselves, and he hearkened, yet never a word would say,
 Yet too early he might not deem it, for they shone as a second day,
 And their beauty it vied with the morning, yet his fairness outshone the twain,
 For naught to the youth was lacking that favour and praise might gain.
 Then a linen cloth they proffered, but the lad he took it ill,
 An he robed himself before them, their presence should shame him still.
 Perforce must the maidens leave him, nor longer might linger there
 Tho' in sooth they would fain have questioned lest deeper the wounds he bare.
 (For such was the way of woman, and such is true woman's will,
 Tho' scatheless themselves yet the sorrow of a friend it doth work them ill.)
 Then he strode to the bed, and he found there fresh raiment so fine and white,
 With a girdle he bound it round him, 'twas of silk and of gold so bright;
 And hosen of scarlet woollen they drew on the fearless knight,
 In sooth they well became him who was comely in all men's sight.
 And of ruddy brown well fashioned, (nor lining they thought to spare)
 Were robe alike and mantle, and within was the ermine fair,
 And without were they decked with sable, both black and grey in hue;
 Then the gallant youth the mantle around his shoulders threw,
 With a belt so rich and costly he girt him found the waist,
 And the fastening of the mantle with a golden clasp was graced.
 And his mouth was red and glowing—Then his host he drew anigh,
 And many a proud knight followed, to greet him courteously,
 And e'en as 'twas done the heroes they spake with a great amaze
 'Ne'er saw they a man so goodly!'—And all would the mother praise
 Who such son to the world had given—And in truth and in courtesy
 They spake, 'Whatsoe'er he asketh for his service fulfilled shall be,
 And favour and love await him if his worth win its meed alway,'
 And of those who hereafter saw him none were there who said them nay.
 By his hand the host then took him, and forth from his chamber led,
 And the prince fain would hear the story how the night hours with him had sped,

'Were it otherwise, I think me that living I scarce might wake,
 'Twas well that my mother bade me thus shelter with thee to take
 Ere yet from her I had ridden—May God requite ye both,
 For mercy Sir Knight, and kindness, hast thou shown to me nothing loth.'
 So went our hero witless where to God and the host they'd sing,
 And the prince by the Mass would teach him that which health to the soul shall bring.
 He would rede him well of the Offering—How to sign himself with the Cross,
 And thus work on the Devil vengeance, who seeketh for aye our loss!
 Then again to the hall of the castle and the morning meal they came,
 And the host set his guest beside him, and he ate without fear or shame.
 Then out spake the prince so courteous, 'An it seemeth not ill to thee,
 Fain am I to know thy dwelling, and from whence thou art come to me?'
 Then frankly he told the story how his mother's side he fled,
 Of the ring and the clasp so golden, and the winning the harness red.
 And the prince he knew the Red Knight, and his fate it pleased him ill,
 And the name of his guest he asked not but 'The Red Knight' he called him still.
 Then e'en as the meal was over, were they tamed the ways so wild,
 For the host to his guest he quoth thus 'Thou speakest as doth a child,
 Why hold not thy peace of thy mother, and otherwise turn thy speech?
 An thou follow henceforth my counsel far wiser the ways I'll teach!'
 'And thus I begin, do thou hearken—From true shame shalt thou never flee,
 A shameless man, bethink thee, what place in the world hath he?
 As a bird that moulteeth ever so his honour doth fall away,
 And hereafter he hath his portion in the fires of Hell for aye.'
 'So noble methinks thy bearing, a folk's Lord thou well mayst be;
 If high be thy birth, and yet higher the lot that awaiteth thee,
 Then see that thy heart hath pity for the poor and needy man
 And fight thou against his sorrow with free gifts as best thou can,
 For a true knight must aye be humble—A brave man who need doth know
 Full often with shame he battles, and sore is that strife I trow,
 For him shall thy help be ready—(Who lighteneth his brother's need
 From Heaven he winneth favour as rewarding for righteous deed.)
 For in sooth his case is harder than theirs who as beggars stand
 'Neath the window, and succour seeking, for bread shall stretch forth the hand.'
 'Thou shalt learn in a fitting measure both rich and poor to be,
 Who spendeth as lord at all times no lordly soul hath he—
 Yet who heapeth o'er-much his treasure he winneth methinks but shame,
 But give thou unto each their honour, so best shalt thou guard thy fame.'
 'I saw well as thou earnest hither that thou hadst of my counsel need—
 Yield not unto ways discourteous but give to thy bearing heed,
Nor be thou so swift to question—Yet I would not that thou withhold
 An answer good and fitting to the speech one with thee would hold.
 Thou canst hear and see, I wot well full five shalt thy senses be,
 An thou use them aright, then wisdom it draweth anear to thee.'
 'In thy wrath remember mercy, and slay not a conquered foe,
 He who to thine arms shall yield him take his pledge and let him go;
 Unless he such ill have wrought thee as sorrow of heart doth give,
 An my counsel thou fain wouldst follow, then in sooth shalt thou let him live.'
 'Full oft shalt thou bear thy harness—When thy knightly task is sped
 Thy hands and face thou shalt cleanse them from the rust and the iron red,
 For such is in truth thy duty, so thy face shall be fair and bright,
 And when maiden's eyes behold thee they shall deem thee a goodly sight.'
 'Be manly and of good courage, so shalt thou deserve thy fame;
 Hold women in love and honour, it shall be to thine own good name;
 And be ever steadfast-minded as befitteth good man and true,

An with lies thou wouldst fain deceive them much harm can thy dealings do.
 If true love be repaid with falsehood then swift shalt the judgment be,
 And a speedy end to all honour and renown shall it bring to thee.
 As beneath the stealthy footsteps of the thief the dry stick breaks,
 And the slumbering watcher, startled, to his danger swiftly wakes
 So false ways and dealings crooked in their wake bring but strife and woe;
 Prove this by true love, for true women have skill 'gainst the hidden foe,
 And their wiles can outweigh his cunning—An thou winnest from women hate,
 Then for ever art thou dishonoured, and shame on thy life shall wait.'
 'So take thou to heart my counsel—And more would I tell to thee;
 Husband and wife united as one shall they ever be,
 As the sun that this morning shineth, and this morn that we call to-day,
 So the twain may be sundered never but *one* shall be held alway.
 As twin blossoms from one root springing e'en so shall they bloom and grow;
 With wisdom receive my counsel that its truth thou hereafter know.'
 Then he thanked his host for his teaching, nor spake of his mother more,
 But as true man and son so loving in his heart her memory bore.
 Then the prince spake as did him honour, 'Yet more will I teach to thee,
 Thou shalt learn knightly skill and bearing—In such wise didst thou come to me,
 Full many a wall have I looked on that the shields might better deck
 Than that shield erewhile became thee, as it hung there around thy neck.
 None too late shall be the morning, we'll hence to the open field,
 And fitting skill I'll teach thee that thine arms thou mayst rightly wield.
 So bring to my guest his charger, and mine shalt thou hither lead,
 And each knight shall make him ready, and mount, e'en as I, his steed.
 And pages shall thither follow, and each one shall bear a spear,
 And the shaft shall be strong and untested, and blazoned with colours clear.'
 So the prince and his guest together they rode to the grassy plain,
 And many a feat so skilful was shown by that knightly train.
 And the lad he learned how to check him his charger in seeming flight
 With touch of spur, and turn him once more 'gainst the foeman's might;
 His spear to sink as needed, and before him hold his shield
 As he rode a joust; 'Thus shalt thou thine arms in future wield!'
 Thus of lack of skill he cured him better than by the bough
 That smiteth unruly children and breaketh their skin I trow.
 Then he bade swift knights come hither, and a joust with the stranger ride,
 And himself to the ring he led him, and against the foe would guide;
 And the lad in his first joust carried his spear through the foeman's shield,
 And tho' strong was the knight yet he smote him from his steed on the open field.
 And they marvelled much who beheld it—Then another to joust rode near,
 And Parzival took unto him a fresh and unbroken spear,
 And his youth had strength and courage—The beardless lad and fair
 Was spurred by his inborn manhood, and to Gamuret's skill was heir—
 Then he urged his charger onward full swiftly against the foe,
 And his spear rang true on the four nails, and struck nor too high nor low,
 Nor the host's knight might keep his saddle, but prone on the sward he fell,
 Of the spear-shaft full many a splinter the force of the blow might tell.
 Thus five of the knights were smitten ere the host to the Burg would ride,
 And the victory was his, and hereafter fierce strife might he well abide.
 Then they who his deeds had witnessed, the wise men, they needs must say
 That great was the skill and valour he had shown in the joust that day,
 'Our lord may be free of sorrow, and his youth it may bloom anew
 If he give him to wife his daughter, our lady so fair and true.
 If we see him wax in wisdom then the sorrow shall be o'erpast—
 The death of his sons a shadow o'erlong o'er his life hath cast,

But now to his door hath ridden one who maketh amends for all,
 And gladness no more shall fly him, but it seeketh his palace hall!
 Then homeward they turned at even when the board for the feast was spread,
 And the prince bade his daughter hither (for so I the tale have read)
 As he saw the maid draw near him the host to Liassé spake,
 'To this knight shalt thou do all honour, and a kiss from his lips shalt take,
 With Good Fortune for guide he fareth! And of *thee* would I pray this thing,
 If token perchance she beareth, thou wilt leave to the maid her ring—
 Yet none hath she, nor clasp—Who should give her what that forest princess wore?
 For *she* won from the hand of her husband what thine hand from her raiment tore,
 From *Liassé* canst thou take little'—Then the lad he must blush for shame,
 On her lips did kiss the maiden, and her mouth it was red as flame.
 And Liassé was fair to look on, and gentle of heart and pure,
 And a hero might well have loved her with a love that should aye endure.
 Full long and low was the table, nor many might sit thereat,
 At its head was the prince so kindly, and his guest by his side he set
 Betwixt him and his daughter, and the maiden with snow-white hand
 Must carve, as he willed, for the Red Knight, so her father would give command,
 And courteous, she did his bidding, and none did the twain prevent
 As shy glances rosy-blushing, they each to the other sent!
 The feast over, the maiden left them, but she bade not the guest 'Farewell,'
 For twice seven days in honour Parzival with his host did dwell.
 But within his heart lay a sorrow, 'twas no other I ween than this,
 He would he enough had striven to be worthy of wedded bliss,
 And he thought him a goal so worthy must lead to a guerdon high
 Both in this life and e'en in the other—And these words they shall be no lie.
 One morning for leave he prayed him, from Graharz he fain would ride,
 And his host, sore loth to lose him, awhile rode his steed beside.
 Fresh sprang of grief the fountain as the prince spake, 'I lose once more
 A son, Death of *three* hath robbed me, thy loss now shall make them *four*.
 And threefold it was, my sorrow—Who my heart would in pieces smite
 Fourfold and from hence would bear them, in the pain should I find delight.
One for thee, since thou ridest from me, and *three* for my three sons slain—
 Bravely they fell in battle, such guerdon doth knighthood gain!'

'And its end is of sorrow woven—One death all my joy doth lame,
 The death of my son so gallant, Schenteflur did they call his name;
 When Kondwiramur her kingdom and herself would withhold with strife
 From Klamidé the king, and Kingron, in her aid did he lose his life,
 And my heart with the thrust of sorrow, as a hedge is it piercèd thro'.
 Now all too soon dost thou leave me since no comfort from thee I drew,
 Ah! would Death were here my portion since Liassé, that maiden bright,
 And the land I had deemed so goodly find no favour in this thy sight!'

'My other son, Count Laskoit, by Idêr son of Noit was slain
 Anent a hawk—Little gladness from his death I methinks might gain—
 Gurzgrei did they call my third son, to whom Mahaut gave her heart,
 As his wife did he win the maiden from her brother proud Ekunât.
 'Gainst Brandigan on a venture for Schoie-de-la-kurt he'd ride,
 And the Prince Mabonagrein smote him, and there by his hand he died.
 And Mahaut she lost her beauty, and his mother, my wife, lay dead,
 For thro' sorrow and bitter yearning the days of her life were sped.'

Then the guest saw his host's deep sorrow as he told unto him his woe,
 And he quoth, 'Little wisdom have I, yet if ever the day I know
 When I win knightly fame and honour, so that maiden I well may woo,
 Thou shalt give unto me Liassé, thy daughter so fair and true.

Thou hast told me of o'er-much sorrow; if thy grief I may lift from thee
 From the load of so sore a burden I gladly will set thee free!
 Then leave from the prince so kindly the young knight that morn would pray,
 And from all his gallant vassals; and he rode from their land away;
 And the prince, in the game of sorrow, tho' heavy before his throw,
 Had lost yet more, for from threefold to fourfold his grief must grow.

BOOK IV KONDWIRAMUR

Thus Parzival parted from them, and courteous he now might bear
 His knightly garb, and he knew them, the customs of knighthood fair.
 But alas! he full sore was troubled with many a bitter pain,
 And the world was too close, and too narrow the width of the spreading plain,
 And the greensward he thought was faded, and his harness had paled to white;
 So the heart the eye constraineth and dimmeth awhile the sight.
 For since he had waxed less simple somewhat of his father's lore,
 The desire of the man for the maiden, in his wakening heart he bore;
 And he thought but of fair Liassé, that maiden so true and sweet,
 How never her love she proffered, yet with honour the guest would greet.
 And wherever his horse might turn it he took in his grief no heed,
 And if slowly it paced or swiftly he thought not to guide its speed.
 Nor many a field well-fenced nor wayside cross he found;
 Nor chariot-wheel nor horse-hoof had furrowed with tracks the ground;
 Untrodden the woodland pathway, nor wide was I ween the way,
 And he knew not the hills and the valleys—Full oft shall ye hear men say,
 'Who rideth astray, in his wandering the lost axe may often find.'
 They lay here unnumbered round him, if for *axe* ye have *trees* in mind.
 Yet tho' far was the road he journeyed yet he went in no wise astray,
 And thus from the land of Graharz he rode through the livelong day,
 Till he came to the kingdom of Brobarz thro' mountains wild and high—
 When the shadows of evening lengthened, and red flushed the western sky,
 Then he came to a mountain torrent, and the voice of the raging flood
 Rang clear as its waves rushed foaming round the crags that amid them stood.
 So he rode adown by the waters till he came to the city fair
 Which a king had bequeathed to his daughter; 'twas the city of Pelrapär,
 And I wot that tho' fair the maiden who bare of that land the crown,
 Great grief and small gladness had they who dwelt in that noble town!
 Like an arrow that swiftly speedeth from the bow by a strong arm bent,
 The waters onward rushing on their downward pathway went;
 And a bridge hung high above them with woven work so fair,
 And the stream it flowed swift to the ocean—Well-guarded was Pelrapär,
 As children in swings delight them, and swing themselves to and fro,
 So swung the bridge, yet ropeless, youthful gladness it scarce might know!
 And on either side were standing, with helmets for battle bound,
 Of knights e'en more than thirty, and they bade him to turn him round,
 And with lifted swords, tho' feeble, the strife would they gladly wait,
 They thought 'twas the King Klamidé whom they oft had seen of late,
 So royally rode the hero to the bridge o'er the field so wide—
 As thus to the youth they shouted, and with one voice his arms defied,
 Tho' he spurred his steed full sharply it shrank from the bridge in fright,
 But ne'er knew he a thought of terror—To the ground sprang the gallant knight.
 And he led his horse by the bridle where the bridge hung high in air,
 Too faint were a coward's courage so bitter a strife to dare!
 And well must he watch his footsteps for he feared lest his steed should fall—
 From the other side of the water the knights had ceased their call,
 And with shield and sword-blade gleaming within the town they passed,

For they feared lest an army followed, and they closed their portals fast.
 So Parzival crossed the river, and he rode o'er a grassy plain
 Where many in search of knighthood must death for their guerdon gain;
 And he came to the palace portal, and stately the Burg and high,
 And there hung there a ring of iron, and he gripped it right manfully.
 But none to his call made answer, save only a maiden bright
 Who looked forth from out her window, and was 'ware of the gallant knight.
 Spake the maiden so fair and courteous, 'An thou comest, Sir Knight, as foe,
 Little need have we of thine hatred, for heavy enough our woe,
 A wrathful host doth threaten already by sea and land!'

Then he quoth, 'Nay, gentle lady, at thy portals a man doth stand
 Who will, if he can, do thee service! For thy service my hand is fain,
 And never reward save thy greeting as payment I think to gain.'
 Then the maiden she went in her wisdom to the queen and an entrance prayed
 For the knight, and in sooth his coming it brought to their sorrow aid.
 So Parzival came to the city; down the roadway on either hand
 The folk who would fain defend them in close groups he saw them stand,
 Soldiers on foot, and slingers, and they who the dart could throw,
 He saw as he came towards them, in many a goodly row.
 And many a squire so valiant, the bravest from out the land,
 Long, sharp, and strong were the lances they bare in each strong right hand.
 There too, so the story telleth, was many a merchant grave,
 And the javelin and axe were their weapons, so their lady commandment gave.
 And their skins, they were loose for hunger—Then the Marshal of the queen
 Made his way thro' their ranks to the castle, and heavy his task I ween.
 And well was that castle guarded, with towers o'er the chambers high;
 And barbican, keep, and oriel in such numbers they met his eye
 That buildings so strong and so many in his lifetime he never saw,
 And on horse or afoot from all sides the knights to his welcome draw.
 'Twas a sorry host, for as ashes some were grey, some were pale as clay,
 (My lord the Count of Wertheim sure had starved on such scanty pay!)
 Thro' want full sore they hungered, nor cheese, nor bread, nor meat
 Had they, and their teeth were idle since naught might they find to eat.
 And their palate knew naught of the flavour of the wine-cup, or red or white,
 And their doublet hung loosely on them, and wasted each limb of might,
 And their skin like wrinkled leather on each rib hung gaunt and grim,
 For hunger their flesh had wasted and driven from every limb.
 Thro' want must they sorely suffer, little grease in their fuel ran—
 (A hero to this had forced them, the proud King of Brandigan,
 Thus they paid for Klamidé's wooing)—The mead might they seldom spill,
 For small was their store, I think me, the vessel or cup to fill.
 In Trühending oft shall ye hearken the hiss of the frying cake,
 In such music, methinks, but seldom the folk might their pleasure take!
 (And if for such want I'd mock them, then in truth must I share their shame,
 For there where I oft dismount me, where men do me 'Master' name,
 At home in mine house, with trouble e'en the mice shall their portion steal,
 Nor oft for their food be joyful! Nor need they the bread conceal,
 Unhidden, I scarce may find it—Yea, oft doth it happen so,
 And I, Wolfram of Eschenbach, oft times such pleasure and ease may know.)
 But enough of my lamentation, once more ye the tale shall hear
 How the city was full of sorrow, and for gladness they paid full dear.
 How these heroes, so rich in courage, must in need and in scarceness live,
 For so did the manhood bid them, to their need shall ye pity give—
 For their life stood in pledge, might He free it in Whose Hand all power shall be!—
 Yet more of their grief would I tell ye that ye mourn for them bitterly,

With shame their guest did they welcome, for they deemed him so rich and great
 That he craved not thro' need their shelter; he knew naught of their poor estate.
 On the grass did they spread a carpet, where a linden was walled around,
 And trained to a welcome shadow—'Neath its boughs they his arms unbound,
 And the vassals they took his harness; but other than theirs his face
 When he in the streamlet washed it, and cleansed it from red rust trace;
 Nay, the sunlight's rays were shamèd 'neath the glow of his beauty bright,
 And a worthy guest they thought him as they gazed on the gallant knight.
 Then a mantle rich they brought him e'en like to the robe he bare,
 And new was the smell of the sable wherewith it was garnished fair.
 Then they spake, 'Wilt thou look upon her, the queen, our lady true?'
 And the knight made answer straightway, that thing would he gladly do.
 To the palace they came, and the stairway steep and high to the portal led,
 And the light of a fair face met him when his footsteps so far were sped.
 Of his eyes should she be the sweetness—There shone from that lady bright
 A radiant glow and dazzling, ere she welcomed the stranger knight.
 Now Kiot of Katelangen and Manfilot, Dukes the twain,
 Led hither their brother's daughter who as queen o'er this land did reign:
 (For the love of God their harness, shield, and sword, had they put away
 These princes true and stalwart, fair of face tho' their hair was grey.)
 Midway adown the staircase all courteous the maid they led,
 And she kissed the gallant hero, and the lips of the twain were red;
 And she gave him her hand, and she led him, Sir Parzival, to the hall,
 And they sat them adown together in the midst of the courtiers all.
 And feeble and faint the maidens, and the knights who stood there around,
 And vassal alike and hostess, small joy in their life they found.
 Yet Kondwiramur, her beauty did high o'er all others stand,
 Were it Enid, or fair Jeschuté or Kunnewaaré of far Lalande,
 Whoe'er men had deemed the fairest when they women's beauty weighed,
 Their fame to the earth was smitten by the glance of this royal maid.
 Yea, even the twain Isoldé, tho' men praise them evermore,
 They must yield the crown of beauty to the lady Kondwiramur.
 (And her name in our tongue betokens her shapely form and fair)
 And well had they done, the mothers, who had borne such a goodly pair
 As these twain who sat here together, naught did they who stood around
 But gaze on the one and the other—Many friends had our hero found.
 And the thoughts of the knight will I tell ye, 'There Liassé, Liassé here,—
 God will free me from care since I see here Liassé that maiden dear
 The child of a gallant father!'—Yet her fairness was naught I wot,
 'Gainst her beauty who sat beside him, in whom God no wish forgot.
 (The maiden was queen of the country) Yea, e'en as by morning dew
 Refreshed, the rose from its calyx forth buddeth in beauty new,
 And is white and red together—And grief to her guest it wrought,
 To whose courtesy naught was lacking since Gurnemanz' side he sought,
 And his words had from folly freed him; and had bidden him questions spare
 Save only where they were needful—So he sat by that lady fair,
 And never a word his lips spake, tho' he sat close the maid beside—
 Yet to those who know more of woman such silence doth oft betide.
 Then the queen to herself said softly, 'This man disdaineth me,
 He deemeth my fairness faded. Nay, perchance it yet may be
 That in this thing he doeth wisely, his hostess in sooth am I,
 And he is my guest, the first speech should be mine assuredly!
 Gently he looks upon me tho' never a word we speak,
 And courteous hath been his bearing, 'twere well I the silence break;
 Too long have I yet delayed me since here side by side we sit.'

To her guest did she turn, the maiden, and she spake as it seemed her fit:
'Sir Knight, it were well as hostess that the first words came from me,
Since I wot well my kiss as hostess a greeting hath won from thee,
And thou offeredst me thy service, so my maiden hath borne me word,
Our guests scarce are wont to do so, tho' the tidings I fain had heard.
Now tell me, my guest, I prithee, since the tale I am fain to know,
From whence art thou come to my kingdom, and whither thou yet wouldst go?'
'Lady, at early morning I rode from my host away,
A brave knight is he and faithful, yet he sorroweth sore to-day,
And Prince Gurnemanz do men call him, in Graharz he holds command,
From thence I to-day have ridden, thence came I unto this land!'
Then the noble maiden answered, 'Sir Knight, had another told
This tale, methinks that scarcely for truth I the words might hold,
That thou in one day hadst ridden a journey that scarce in twain
My swiftest squire could compass, tho' his charger he spurred amain!
Thy host was my mother's brother; his daughter's youthful glow,
It hath paled before the sorrow which she, e'en as I, must know.
For many sad days and mournful, with sad eyes we've wept our fill
I, and the maid Liassé—Wouldst thou show to thy host goodwill?
Then thou shalt with us, man and woman, this night-tide our sorrow share,
Thou shalt serve him thereby; and I'll tell thee the want we perforce must bear.'
Then out spake her uncle Kiot, 'Lady, I send to thee
Twelve loaves of bread, and of shoulders and hams do I give thee three,
And eight cheeses too are with them, and two casks of wine I trow,
And my brother, he too shall aid thee, of such aid hast thou need enow!'
And Manfilot spake, 'Yea, Lady, I send thee the self-same fare.'
And the maiden she sat in gladness, and of thanks she no word would spare.
Then leave they craved from their lady, and forth would the old men ride
To their hunting-house that was nigh there—But the cell where they would abide,
Was in Alpine wilds so lonely, there unarmed did they dwell afar,
And never a foeman vexed them with tumult or strife of war.
And the messenger sped full swiftly, and the fainting folk were fed,
No Burger within the city but was lacking for other bread,
And many were dead of hunger ere food for their need was found.
Then the queen she bade them share it to the feeble folk around,
With the cheese, the flesh, and the red wine, as Parzival counsel gave,
Scarce a morsel was left, yet they shared it, the queen and her guest so brave.
And swiftly the store had vanished, tho' to many who yet might live,
Nor were slain by cruel hunger this succour fresh life might give.
Then they bade them a couch make ready for the guest, and 'twas soft his bed,
(Had the Burgers been hawks for the hunting methinks they were not o'er-fed
As their scanty board bare witness) yea, the folk there, one and all,
Bare the marks of bitter hunger, save the gallant Parzival.
Then leave he prayed of his hostess, he would lay him down to rest.
Do ye think that for tapers straw-wisps must light so brave a guest?
Nay, better were they I think me; he betook him, the hero fair,
To a bed so rich and stately a king well might slumber there,
Nor of poverty bare it token, and a carpet before it lay.
Then he prayed the knights to go hence, nor longer there delay,
And noble lads un-shod him, and straightway he fell asleep,
Till the cry of heart-sorrow woke him, and tears that bright eyes should weep.
This chanced e'en as I will tell ye; no woman's law she brake,
For pure was she aye, the maiden of whom this venture spake.
Long stress of war constrained her, and the death of her champion true,
So heavy her heart with sorrow that sleep from her eyelids flew,

So she went, this royal lady, (but never such love to claim
 As urgeth a gentle maiden to crave of a *wife* the name)
 But she sought help and friendly counsel, tho' clad in a warlike gear,
 A silken shift, (strife she wakeneth who doth thus to a man draw near.)
 And the maiden she wrapped around her a mantle of samite long,
 And she went as her steps were guided by sorrow and bitter wrong.
 Her maidens and waiting women who lay there around her bed
 She left them slumbering softly, and with noiseless footsteps sped
 To a chamber, there, e'en as she bade them, Parzival all lonely lay,
 And around his couch the tapers burnt bright as the light of day.
 To his bed she turned her footsteps, and she knelt low his couch before,
 But no thought of love unlawful the heart of either bore.
 Of joy bereft was the maiden, his help she was fain to claim,
 If awhile they lay there together it brought unto neither shame.
 So bitter the maiden's sorrow that there fell full many a tear
 On Parzival, and her weeping thro' his slumbers the knight might hear,
 And waking, he looked upon her, and sorrow and joy he felt,
 And he rose up, the youthful hero, as the maiden before him knelt,
 And he spake to the queen, 'Say, Lady, wilt thou now make a mock of me?
 To God only, and never to mortal methinks shouldst thou bow the knee.
 But rise thou and sit beside me, or grant me I pray this grace,
 Lay thyself down where I was lying, I will seek me some other place!'
 But she spake, '*Thyself* wilt thou honour, and show honour alike to me,
 And by never a touch wilt shame me, I will e'en lay me down by thee.'
 Then the knight he spake by his knighthood he would e'en do as he should say,
 So down on the bed beside him in peace the maiden lay.
 Tho' well sped were the hours of the night-time no cock did they hear to crow,
 Empty and bare the perches, for the famine had left them so.
 Then the maiden, grieving sorely, prayed him courteous her plaint to hear,
 "Twill rob thee of sleep an I tell thee, and work to thee ill I fear.
 My foeman the King Klamidé, and Kingron his seneschal,
 My castles and lands have wasted, yea, all but this citadel.
 My father, King Tampentäre, by his death me, poor orphan, left
 In peril and need so deadly, of all hope am I well-nigh left.
 Kinsmen and princes many, and vassals, both rich and poor,
 Yea, a mighty army served me, but they serve me now no more.
 One half, nay, far more I think me, in defence of my land are slain,
 Alas! whence shall I, poor maiden, or gladness or succour gain?
 In such sore strait do I find me, I am ready myself to kill
 Ere my maidenhood and this body I yield to Klamidé's will.
 His wife he is fain to make me, yet his was the hand that slew
 My Knight Schenteflur, the hero, whose heart was both brave and true,
 And the flower was he of all manhood, falsehood he ne'er might know,
 Who was brother unto Liassé, and she too shall share my woe.'
 But e'en as she named Liassé then sorrow awoke anew
 In his heart who would fain do service, and his spirit, so high and true,
 Sank, as sinketh a hill to the valley, at the thought of that maiden dear;
 Yet he spake to the queen, 'Say, Lady, how best may I serve thee here?'
 'Sir Knight an thou couldst but rid me of Kingron the seneschal;
 In knightly joust of my warriors full many before him fell.
 With the morning again he cometh, and he thinketh that free from harm
 His lord soon shall lie, my husband, in the clasp of my circling arm.
 My Burg hast thou seen, and thou knowest how lofty its towers and high,
 Yet down to the moat below them will I fling myself joyfully,
 Ere of maidenhood King Klamidé shall rob me against my will,

If no better may be, then by dying, his boasting I yet may still!'
 Then he quoth, 'Lady, French or Breton, of what country soe'er he be,
 From Kingron my hand shall shield thee, with what power may be given to me.'
 The night was spent, with the dawning the queen she arose again,
 Lowly she bent before him, nor from thanks would her lips restrain.
 Then she passed from the chamber softly, and no man might be aware,
 Tho' wise were he else, of her errand, save only the knight so fair.
 Nor Parzival longer slumbered, for the sun was swift to rise,
 And it pierced thro' the clouds of morning, and smote on his wakened eyes;
 And he heard the sweet bells chiming, as the folk church and minster sought,
 For Klamidé their joy had banished, and their land in sore peril brought.
 Then up rose the young knight also; the chaplain was in his place
 And he sang to God and his lady; and the guest saw the maiden's face,
 And he gazed till the Mass was ended, and the benediction o'er.
 Then he bade them to bring his harness, and soon was he armed once more,
 A good knight and strong they deemed him, in gallant armour fair.
 Then on came Klamidé's army with banners borne high in air.
 And Kingron, he came full swiftly, he sped far before the force,
 And, so hath the story told me, of Iserterre's land his horse.
 And there waited before the portal the son of King Gamuret,
 And the prayers and the hopes of the townsfolk on the youthful knight were set.
 Nor with sword he ere this had striven—From afar did he aim his stroke,
 And so swift his joust, in the meeting the gear of both chargers broke,
 And their girths were burst asunder, and each steed to its knees was brought,
 And the heroes who yet bestrode them of their swords must they needs take thought;
 In their scabbards did they find them—And already did Kingron bear
 Wounds in arm and breast, and I wot me that loss was his portion there.
 For this joust brought him loss of the glory that methinks had been his alway
 Till he met with this knight, and their meeting, of his pride was the dying day.
 And valiant did men account him, six knights had he prostrate laid
 Who rode in one field against him, yet here was he well repaid
 By Parzival's right hand valiant, and Kingron the seneschal
 Thought strange was indeed his peril, for *stones* surely on him fell
 Cast forth from a mighty engine—Other arms wrought his overthrow,
 For a sword clave clean thro' his helmet, and Parzival laid him low,
 And he knelt with one knee upon him, and he bade him forthwith to give
 What he ne'er to a foe had given, his pledge, an he fain would live.
 But he thought not to be his captor who had vanquished him here in field,
 But he bade him ride hence to Grahaz and his pledge to its lord to yield.
 'Nay, Sir Knight, thou hadst better slay me, 'twas I who slew his son,
 'Twas my hand of life that robbed him, Schenteflur—Thou from God hast won
 Great honour, yea, men shall praise thee for the strength that thou here hast shown,
 Of a sooth art thou here the victor, and Good Fortune shall be thine own.'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Yet another is the choice I will give to thee,
 Yield thou to the queen whom thy master in his wrath wronged so grievously!'
 'Nay! Then were I lost of a surety, for I wot with their sword-blades keen
 My body they'd hew in pieces, small as dust in the sun is seen!
 Such sorrow of heart, I think me, and grief thro' my hand they win,
 Full many a gallant hero who dwelleth those walls within.'
 'Then hence from this plain shalt thou journey to the kingdom of Brittany,
 And bear to a gentle maiden thy pledge and thy fealty.
 For she for my sake hath suffered a sorrow she ne'er had borne,
 Had not Kay been of knightly customs, and of courtesy fair forsworn.
 Say to her how with me it fareth, that I come not in joy again
 Till my spear, thro' his shield sharp-piercing, hath wiped out her honour's stain.

To King Arthur and to his lady, and the knights of the Table Round
 Bear my greeting, and say in their presence shall I never again be found
 Till the day I from shame have freed me; from the shame which *I* too must share
 With the maiden who smiled upon me, and great grief for that greeting bare.
 Say to *her* I am aye her servant, to serve her with service fain!
 So Kingron must swear unto him ere they parted, those heroes twain.
 Thus he came afoot to the city, for thither had fled his steed,
 The Burgers' help in battle, from their anguish the folk he freed.
 But the outer host was troubled that Kingron, their chosen knight,
 In this wise had been dishonoured, and broken his dauntless might.
 Then they led Parzival in triumph to their queen so fair and young,
 And the maiden was fain to greet him, and her white arms around him clung,
 And in close embrace she held him as she spake, 'The wide earth doth hold
 No man I will have for my husband save him whom these arms enfold!'
 And as here they disarmed the hero her part would the maiden bear
 With ready hand and skilful, nor her service she thought to spare.
 But tho' heavy had been his labour, yet scanty, I ween, the board.
 And the Burgers they came before him, and they sware him with one accord
 They would have him for lord and master; and the queen in her turn she spake,
 And she said that this knight so valiant for her love and her lord she'd take
 Who had won him a fame so mighty o'er Kingron the seneschal—
 But now from the castle bulwarks two sails might be seen by all,
 A strong wind to the haven brought them, and their lading must needs make glad
 The folk, they bare naught but victuals,—God's guidance they surely had!
 Then they rushed adown from the ramparts, and swift to the ships they fled,
 The hungry crowd, for the booty, as leaves by the wind are sped.
 With flesh they were not o'erweighted, so wasted and thin were they,
 Nor they strutted with well-filled belly, but bending they went their way.
 The queen's marshal he sware the shipmen, by the doom of the hempen cord,
 Safe conduct for life and lading, none should touch that which lay aboard.
 Then he bade them to lead these merchants straightway into the town,
 And Parzival for their lading the double he paid them down,
 And gladly the merchants took it, for princely they deemed such pay;
 And the Burgers these welcome viands to their fires did they bear straightway.
 Now fain would I there take service, no man of them all drank beer,
 Wine and food had they there in plenty—Then he did as you now shall hear,
 Parzival, the gallant hero, for first in portions small,
 With his own right hand he shared out the viands among them all,
 Yea, even unto the nobles; so long had they lacked for bread,
 He feared it had wrought them evil if perchance they were over-fed.
 But to each one he gave his portion, and his counsel they deemed it right,
 And more should they win ere nightfall from the hand of this gallant knight.
 To their marriage couch they bade them, 'twas the will both of king and queen—
 Yet throughout the night so courteous he bare him, in truth I ween,
 He little had pleased those ladies who now, in these latter days,
 In passion's heat forget all that should win for a woman praise;
 Tho' modest they seem to strangers, yet their heart gives their mien the lie,
 And their tenderness worketh sorrow to their friend, tho' in secrecy.
 But the steadfast knight and faithful guards himself at every hour,
 And well knoweth to spare a woman an she chanceth within his power.
 For he thinketh, and thinketh truly, 'For many a lonely year
 For her favours I served this lady; now, behold, the day is here
 When her will is to reward me, and here we twain do lie—
 Had I touched with bare hand her vesture I were blest to eternity!
 An I vantage take of her slumbers to myself untrue I seem,

Methinks we were both dishonoured did I waken her from her dream,
 For a woman's sleep is holy, and all men shall own its sway.
 Thus the Waleis, who ne'er had feared him, lay still till the dawn of day.
 Thus he whom men called the Red Knight, a maiden he left the queen,
 Yet surely she deemed in the morning his wife she o'er night had been,
 And for love of her lord her tresses she bound with the morning light
 As matrons are wont to bind them. And he won him, the gallant knight,
 Castles and lands around them from the hand of his maiden bride,
 But her *heart* was ere this his guerdon, and in peace did the twain abide.
 Thus glad in their love they held them two days till the third night fell,
 And often he thought might he take her to himself it would please him well.
 Then he thought of his mother's counsel, and how Gurnemanz spake of yore,
 That man and wife should as *one* be, and the doubt vexed his soul no more,
 And his wife did he take unto him—Love's custom ever old,
 Yet ever new to lovers, to these twain brought joy untold.
 'Twas well, not evil, with them—Now hear how the king, their foe,
 As he rode in his might to battle, must tidings of evil know.
 'Twas a squire who fain had told them, all crimson his spurs with blood;
 'Before Pelrapär on the meadow have they foughten those heroes good,
 'Twas a bitter strife and knightly; thy seneschal fell that day,
 Kingron, who led thine army, to King Arthur must take his way.
 As he in departing bade them lies the army upon the plain.
 Pelrapär shalt thou find well guarded 'gainst thyself and thine armies twain,
 There within is a gallant hero, and naught doth he crave but strife;
 In the camp of thy hired soldiers is many a rumour rife,
 They say from the good Round Table cometh Ither of Cumberland
 To the help of the queen, and knightly and valiant methinks his hand!
 'Twas his arms that rode forth for jousting, and no man his deeds shall blame,
 In such wise hath he borne his armour as winneth him meed of fame.'
 Quoth the king to the squire, 'My lady, the queen, she desireth me,
 And she and her land so goodly I trow shall my portion be.
 And Kingron the seneschal told me, and surely the truth he spake,
 That famine doth plague the city, and peace they ere long must make,
 And the queen she her love shall proffer'—His wrath must the squire abide.
 Then the king and his host passed onward, and a knight did toward them ride,
 And he spared not his horse but spurred it, and told them the self-same tale,
 And the king deemed the loss o'er-heavy, and courage and joy must fail.
 Then a prince spake from out the army, 'Tho' Kingron hath valour shown,
 Yet never he fought for *our* manhood, he fought for himself alone.
 Now let him to death be stricken—Why then should they be cast down,
 Two hosts, this one, and the army that lieth before the town?'
 Then he bade his lord take courage, 'Once more will we try our fate,
 Let them look to their arms, the conflict shall be for their strength too great,
 We will make an end of their gladness! Bid thy vassals and kinsmen hear,
 With banners twain before them to the town shall they draw anear;
 Down the hill will we ride upon them, but afoot must we storm the gate,
 For so shall we work them evil, and victory shall on us wait.'
 Galogandres, the Duke of Gippones, it was who this counsel gave,
 And sorrow he brought on the Burgers—but slain was this hero brave,
 And slain, too, the brave Count Narant, a prince from Uckerland's shore,
 And many another hero whom dead from the field they bore.
 Now hear ye another story, how the Burgers would guard their wall.
 Strong stakes of wood sharp-pointed they made fast in tree-trunks tall;
 (Sore pain thus was wrought the besiegers) and the trunks were made fast that day
 To a rope that by wheel was guided, so they guarded their walls away.

And all this had they done and tested ere Klamidé would storm the gate
 To avenge the fall of Kingron—There had come to their land of late
 Greek fire, for the ships had brought it that of food brought a goodly store,
 And it burnt of the foe the weapons, and the engines of deadly war;
 And battering-ram or tortoise in vain 'gainst the walls were wheeled,
 No weapon had they for onslaught but was forced to the flame to yield!
 Now Kingron the seneschal journeyed till he came on to Breton ground,
 In his hunting-house in Briziljan King Arthur at last he found,
 And Karminöl did they call it—As 'fore Pelrapär he fought,
 So at Parzival's word his surety to the maid of Lalande he brought,
 And glad was fair Kunnewaaré that, faithful, he mourned her shame
 Whom men there knew as the Red Knight, and this knight at his bidding came.
 And soon were the wondrous tidings amid the courtiers spread,
 And he stood there before King Arthur, a gallant knight ill-spied.
 Then he spake unto him and his vassals in such wise as he needs must speak,
 And Kay was with terror smitten, and crimson it grew, his cheek,
 And he spake, 'Is it thou, O Kingron? Ah! many a Breton knight,
 Thou seneschal of Klamidé, thy hand hath o'erthrown in fight!
 If thy captor ne'er look upon me with favour, thine office high
 Shall turn to thy good; we are rulers of the caldron, both thou and I,
 Of thy wisdom and skill do thou aid me, to win me the favour fair
 Of this maiden Kunnewaaré, and sweet cates for her board prepare!'
 Nor they asked from him other ransom—Now leave we that tale and hear
 What had passed since we left the story—So the host to the town drew near,
 To Pelrapär came the King Klamidé, and a bitter strife arose.
 The inner host strove with the outer, and in sooth were they gallant foes,
 Fresh strength had they won and courage, and bravely they held the field;
 And Parzival, lord of the country, in the vanguard he bare his shield.
 And he swung aloft his weapon, thro' the helm clave the blade so keen,
 And the knights he o'erthrew before him found a bitter death I ween,
 For there, where the corslet opened, the Burgers they pierced them thro',
 In such wise would they take their vengeance—this wrought grief to the hero true,
 And Parzival, he forbade them, and they ceased at their lord's command,
 But of living knights full twenty were captive unto their hand.
 Yet Parzival well had marked it how the king and his bravest knights
 Sought not fame before the portals, but far out in the plain would fight;
 Then forth by a path untrodden the hero a circuit made,
 And swiftly he charged where the monarch his banner aloft displayed.
 And, see! there a mighty slaughter the guard of the king befell,
 And the shields they were hewn in pieces, the Burgers they fought so well.
 And Parzival's shield had vanished 'fore the blows and the sword-blades keen;
 And tho' little his skill rejoiced them, yet all who the strife had seen,
 They spoke but to praise his valour—Galogandres the standard bare,
 (Well he knew how to wake their courage!) but dead lay the hero there.
 And Klamidé himself stood in peril, and great stress on his army lay;
 Then he bade them withdraw, for the valour of the Burgers had won the day.
 But Parzival, gallant hero, bade them treat their captives well
 Till the dawn of the third day's morning, and fear on his foemen fell.
 Then the young host, proud and joyful, bade the knights on their oath go free—
 'Good friends, when the word I send ye, then wend your way back to me!'
 Their swords and their goodly harness as prisoners they needs must yield;
 Unarmed did they fare from the city to the host on the outer field.
 'For sooth,' spake their comrades mocking, 'from *wine* must ye needs be red,
 Poor souls, since within the city ye have hungered for lack of bread!'
 'Nay! nay! ye may spare your pity,' so spake they, the heroes good,

'If ye lie here a whole year longer, within is such store of food,
That by them might ye well be nourished! And the queen hath the fairest knight
For her husband, that e'er won knighthood, or carried a shield in fight,
He may well be of lofty lineage, for he lacketh no knightly skill!'
And the king needs must hear the tidings, and in sooth did they please him ill,
And heralds he sent to the city, and he bade them this challenge bear
To him whom the queen had wedded, 'If this knight the strife shall dare,
And the queen doth hold him worthy herself, and her lands so wide,
To defend in single combat, then in peace may our hosts abide!'
And Parzival he was joyful at the message the heralds bare,
And his heart was fain for the combat; and out spake the hero fair,
'Now I pledge me upon mine honour that no man within this wall
Shall lift his hand for my peril, *alone* will I stand or fall!'
So betwixt the moat and the meadow a truce did they swear that day,
And those smiths of battle armed them as meet for the coming fray.
On a gallant war-horse armèd sat the King of Brandigan,
'Twas hight Guverjorz—This charger with many a gallant man,
And many a goodly present, from Gringorz his nephew, king
Of Ipotente did Count Narant from the north o'er the deep seas bring.
And therewith were a thousand footmen, well armed save no shield had they;
(If the tale speaketh true to the third year the king had made good their pay.)
And Gringorz sent him knights five hundred, each one with his helm on head,
And skilled were they all in battle; with Klamidé they hither sped.
And thus had the mighty army, alike both by sea and land,
Encircled the town of Pelrapär, and great need must its folk withstand!
Forth rode Parzival from the city to the field that should aye declare
If 'twas God's will his wife to leave him, the child of King Tampentäre.
Proudly he rode, yet he spurred not his steed to its swiftest flight,
And 'twas armed for need, and its covering was a samite of red so bright,
And the iron lay beneath it—And the hero himself shone fair
In his harness red, red his corslet, and the shield that he proudly bare.
And Klamidé began the conflict—A short spear of wood unwrought,
With that would he fell his foeman, and the joust from afar he sought;
And Guverjorz sprang forth swiftly, and the joust it was ridden well
By those heroes young and beardless, nor one from his saddle fell,
And never a horse or a rider had foughten a better fight;
And the steam rose in clouds from the chargers on which sat each gallant knight,
And so fierce was the fight that the horses, out-wearied with conflict sore,
Stumbled and fell together, in sooth could they do no more.
And joyful they smote, the heroes, till fire from the helm must spring,
Small time had they there for leisure, but zeal to their task must bring;
And the shields were hewn in pieces, and the splinters were tossed on high,
As shuttlecocks gaily smitten to the winds of heaven fly.
Yet Gamuret's son was unwearied, and never a limb did ache,
Tho' Klamidé deemed that the foemen from the city the truce would break.
Then he bade his fellow-foeman to look to his honour well,
And stay the hand of the slingers, for the blows heavy on him fell
As of stones shot forth from an engine—But Parzival made reply,
'Nay, safe art thou from the slingers, my word is thy surety,
Thou hast peace from mine hand, and I swear thee that never a sling shall break
Head, or breast, or thigh, thou art safe here, were it but for mine honour's sake!'
All too soon was Klamidé wearied and spent with the deadly fight,
Who was victor, and who was vanquished, ere long might be seen aright,
And they looked on the King Klamidé, on the grass was he laid alow,
And Parzival's right hand gripped him till forth streamed the crimson flow

Of blood from the ears and nostrils, and the green turf was dyed with red;
 And his foeman unbound the helmet and visor, and bared his head,
 The vanquished would face the death-blow, and the victor spake, 'Here I free
 My wife for aye from thy wooing! Learn thou what Death may be!'
 'Nay! nay! thou gallant hero, thirty-fold doth thy glory grow
 Thro' the valour thine hand hath shown here, since in strife thou hast laid me low.
 What higher fame dost thou look for? Kondwiramur sure shall say
 That Good Fortune hath smiled upon thee, whilst *I* am Misfortune's prey;
 Thy land hast thou now delivered—As when one a leaking boat
 Doth free from the load of water, that it light o'er the waves may float,
 So lightened am I of honour! Manly honour and joy I trow
 Are waxen thin and faded, what profit to slay me *now*?
 From children and children's children mine heritage shall be shame,
 To do more here methinks were needless—For joy thou hast won and fame,
 And a living death is my portion, since for ever from her I part,
 Who fast in love's magic fetters hath held me both mind and heart,
 Little good it forsooth hath brought me, ah! most wretched henceforth am I,
 And this land and its lovely lady for aye in thy power shall lie!'
 Now he who was here the victor on Gurnemanz' counsel thought,
 How mercy should well beseem him who with manhood had valiant fought,
 And he thought him the rede to follow; and thus to the king he spake,
 'I free thee not, to the father of Liassé submission make!'
 'Nay, Sir Knight, I have wrought him evil, 'twas thro' me that his son was slain,
 An ill-fate wouldst thou bring upon me! The hand of thy queen to gain,
 With Schenteflur I battled, and in sooth had I died that day,
 Save that Kingron came to my succour, and his hand did the hero slay.
 For Gurnemanz of Graharz had sent him to Brobarz' land
 At the head of a gallant army; 'twas a fair and knightly band,
 Nine hundred knights who fought well, and rode upon mail-clad steeds,
 And fifteen hundred footmen all armed for valiant deeds,
 For naught but shields should fail them—Too great their might I thought,
 But the seed of such goodly harvest once more their country sought.
 Yet now hath my loss been greater! Of my heroes but few are left,
 What more would thine hand take from me, who of gladness am now bereft?'
 'An easier way I'll show thee, to Brittany shalt thou ride,
 Kingron has gone before thee, there King Arthur he doth abide,
 To *him* shalt thou bear my greeting, and bid him to mourn alway
 The shame I bare as my portion when I rode from his court away.
 A maiden who smiled upon me for my sake was smitten sore—
 Of all that in life e'er grieved me naught ever hath grieved me more!
 And that maid shalt thou tell of my sorrow; and thy pledge to her hand shalt yield,
 And do even as she shall bid thee—Or die here on this foughten field!'
 'So, if here I must choose betwixt them, not long shall my choice delay,'
 Spake the King of Brandigan swiftly, 'From hence will I ride straightway!'
 But his oath did he swear ere he parted whom pride had in peril brought.
 Then Parzival, the hero, for his wearied charger sought,
 And his foot touched nor horse nor stirrup as he light to the saddle sprung,
 And his steed the hewn shields' splinters around him in circles flung.
 And the Burgers I ween were joyful—but their foemen were sad and sore,
 For flesh and bone were wearied, and sorrow of heart they bore.
 And they brought King Klamidé wounded to those who might give him aid,
 And the dead on the bier they bare them, and to rest in the grave they laid.
 From many a guest unwelcome the land at last was freed,
 And the gallant King Klamidé to Löver he rode with speed.
 Now it fell at this time King Arthur and the knights of the Table Round,

And many another hero, at Dianasdron were found.
And in sooth no lie I tell ye when I say that this plain so good
Bare of tent-poles a greater number than the trees in Spessart's wood.
For 'twas ever the wont of King Arthur the high feast of Pentecost
To keep with his knights and vassals, and of maidens a goodly host.
There were many a noble banner, and many a warlike shield
With coat of arms emblazoned, and fair tents stood adown the field;
'Twould be thought of the world a marvel, who should make all the travelling gear
For such wondrous host of ladies as those that were gathered here!
And I think me that never a maiden but had counted it to her shame
If no knight mid the knights around her she might as her lover claim!
Came I myself to such gathering, an such youthful knights were there,
I were loth if my wife beside me thro' such tumult were fain to fare—
(Nay, when folk thus come together far liefer were I away)
May be one might speak unto her, and some such words would say—
'With love of her was he smitten, and ne'er might he healing know
Save that she herself should heal him. Yea, an but her will were so,
Her knight would he be for ever, to serve her his whole life long'
I were swift, with my wife beside me, to flee from such foolish throng!
Yet enough of myself have I spoken—Now hear how King Arthur's tent
Might be known apart from the others; before it on gladness bent
He feasted, the king, with his vassals whose hearts never falsehood knew,
And with many a stately maiden, whose thoughts aye to jousting flew,
As if with darts they sported, and their friend 'gainst the foe would aim,
And if ill befell their hero with sweet words to his aid they came.
Then the youthful King Klamidé in the ring would he bridle draw;
His steel-clad limbs and charger the wife of King Arthur saw,
His helmet and good shield cloven her maidens they saw right well—
So he came to the court, (who had sent him small need have I here to tell.)
So sprang he adown from his charger, and they thronged him on either hand
Ere he came where she sat whom he sought for, Kunnewaaré of fair Lalande.
And he spake, 'Art thou she, O Lady, to whom I owe service fair?
(Yet need doth in part constrain me) from the Red Knight I greeting bear,
He willeth to take upon him the shame that thy lot hath been;
He prays that King Arthur mourn it—Thou wast smitten for him I ween,
Here, Lady, my pledge I bring thee, so my victor hath bidden me,
Else my body to death were forfeit—I will do here as pleaseth thee!'
Then the maiden Kunnewaaré by his hand led the gallant knight
Where Queen Guinevere was seated, she ate with her maidens bright;
And Kay uprose from the table as the tidings he needs must hear,
They brought gladness to Kunnewaaré, but to Kay had they wrought but fear.
And he quoth, 'What he speaketh, Lady, who thus unto thee hath sped
He speaketh perforce, yet I think me he greatly hath been misled!
I thought but to teach thee better, yet for this cause thou hatest me!
Now bid thou this knight disarm him, for his standing o'er-long shall be.'
Then she bade him put off his helmet and visor, the maiden true,
And e'en as the bands were loosened Klamidé the king they knew,
And Kingron he looked upon him, and he saw his lord again,
And he wrung his hands in his anguish till as dry twigs they cracked amain.
Then the seneschal of Klamidé, from the table he sprung straightway,
And he asked of his lord the tidings; and joyless was he that day,
For he spake, 'I am born to sorrow; I have lost such a gallant host,
No man that was born of woman, I think me shall more have lost.
And the load of such bitter sorrow lieth heavy upon my breast,
And joy is to me a stranger, and gladness a fleeting guest!

And grey am I grown for the anguish she hath wrought me, Kondwiramur,—
 Yea, the sorrow of Pontius Pilate, and false Judas who evermore
 Must grieve for his faithless dealings, who did Christ unto death betray,
 What of punishment God layeth on them that woe would I bear alway—
 If so be that the Lady of Brobarz were my wife of goodwill and free,
 And mine arms held her fast, I had recked not what hereafter should chance to me.
 But, alas! for her love is withholden from the ruler of Iserterre,
 And my land and my folk henceforward for her sake shall sorrow bear.
 Mine uncle's son, Mabonagrein, for her love long hath suffered pain;
 And by knightly hand constrained in thy court I, O king, draw rein!
 And well dost thou know in my kingdom much harm have I done to thee,
 Forget that, true knight and faithful, from thy hate do thou set me free
 Since here I abide, a captive—And this maiden my life shall shield,
 Since I stand in her sight, her servant, and my pledge to her hand would yield!
 Then of knightly heart King Arthur forgave him as he would pray,
 And with faithful words, and kindly, showed favour to him that day.
 Far and wide did they tell the tidings how the King of Brandigan
 Rode hither, and man and maiden in thronging crowds they ran.
 Then the king he would crave a comrade, and he spake out with joyless mien,
 'Commend me unto Sir Gawain, if thou deemest me worth, O Queen!
 Well I know that he would desire it, and if he thy word obey,
 Then he honoureth thee, and the Red Knight shall win praise at his hand to-day.'
 Then King Arthur he bade his nephew deal well with the captive king,
 (Tho' I wot well, without his bidding, Sir Gawain had done this thing.)
 And the conquered knight, in whose dealings no falsehood had part or share,
 From the vassals and gallant heroes won a welcome both fit and fair.
 Then Kingron he spake in sorrow, 'Alas! that I needs must see
 The day when in Breton dwellings my king shall a captive be!
 For richer wert thou than Arthur, and of vassals a greater host
 Hath served thee, nor strength was lacking, and of youth canst thou make thy boast.
 Shall men count it to *Arthur's* honour that Kay in his wrath did smite
 A princess whose heart hath shown her the wisdom to choose aright,
 And smile upon one whom henceforward all men may with truth proclaim
 Elect to the highest honour and crown of true knightly fame?
 The tree of their fame these Bretons may deem to have waxen high;
 Dead lay Cumberland's king, but I wot well be by no deed of theirs must die!
 Nor the fame shall be theirs that, my master, thou didst yield to that self-same knight,
 Or that I myself have been vanquished in fair and open fight;
 And the sparks sprang bright from our helmets, and our swords clave the whistling air
 As for life and death we battled, and men looked on our combat fair.'
 Then all at the good Round Table, both rich and poor alike,
 With one voice spake that Kay did evil when a maiden he thought to strike.
 But now will we leave their story, and fare back unto Pelrapär
 Where Parzival reigned as monarch; the waste lands were builded fair,
 And joy was their lot and singing, (and red gold and jewels bright
 King Tampentäre left in the city where awhile he had reigned in might)
 Then rich gifts he gave till men loved him for his knightly hand and free;
 New shields and costly banners the pride of his land should be,
 And many a joust and Tourney did he and his heroes ride.
 And e'en on the distant borders in gallant deeds he vied,
 That hero young and dauntless, and no foeman might e'er deny
 That on battle-field or in Tourney his hand won the victory.
 And now of the queen would I tell ye—What lot might ye hold so fair
 As hers, that gentle lady? In earth's joys had she fullest share.
 Her love it might bud and blossom, nor weakness nor wavering show,

For the worth of her lord and husband her heart scarce might fail to know.
 And each found their life in the other, and each was the other's love.
 If, as saith the tale, they were parted, what grief must each true heart move!
 And I mourn for that gentle lady, her body, her folk, her land,
 (So he won of her love the guerdon) had he freed with his strong right hand.
 Thus courteous he spake one morning (and the knights stood their lord beside),
 'Lady, an it so please thee, give me leave that I hence may ride
 And see how my mother fareth, if weal be her lot, or woe,
 For naught of all that befalls her methinks I for long may know.
 For a short space would I go thither; and if ventures my skill approve
 Therewith would I do thee service, and be worthy my lady's love.'
 Thus he spake, and the story telleth she thought not to say him 'Nay,'
 For she deemed it well; from his vassals all lonely he took his way.

BOOK V ANFORTAS

Now he who would hear what befell him who thus for ventures sought,
 Shall hearken many a marvel ere the tale to an end be wrought
 Let the son of Gamuret ride forth, and all ye good folk and true
 Wish him well, for bitter sorrow this hero hereafter knew,
 Tho' honour and joy should crown him—And sorely his heart did grieve
 That the wife he loved so dearly he now for a space must leave.
 For the mouth never read of woman, and never hath tale been told
 Of a fairer wife and truer, and his heart did she captive hold,
 And his spirit so high was troubled by thoughts of his wife and queen—
 Had courage not been his birthright he had lost it ere this, I ween!
 O'er rock and marshy moorland, with loosened reins the steed
 Dashed free, the rider thought not to guide or check its speed.
 Of a truth the venture telleth, so far did he ride that day
 E'en a bird had been outwearied, and its flight were fain to stay.
 An the tale hath not betrayed me, no further the knight did fare
 When Ither he slew, or from Graharz rode swift unto Pelrapär.
 Now hear ye what chanced unto him; he came at the close of day
 To a water fair, and upon it many boats at anchor lay,
 And the fishers were lords of the water; to the shore did they lie so near
 That e'en as they saw him riding his question they well might hear.
 And one he saw in a vessel all clad in such royal pride
 Scarce richer had been his vesture were he lord of the world so wide;
 Of peacock's plumes his head-gear—Then the knight to the Fisher spake
 And he prayed him for knighthood's bidding, and he prayed him for God's dear sake,
 To help him unto a shelter where he might thro' the night hours rest.
 And the Fisher sad he answered in this wise the stranger guest;
 And he quoth, 'Nay, Sir Knight, I know not for full thirty miles around,
 By land alike or water, where dwelling may yet be found
 Save one house, I would bid thee seek it, for it lieth in sooth anear,
 Thro' the livelong day wert thou riding none other thou findest here.
 Ride there to the high cliff's ending, then turn thee to thy right hand
 Until to the moat thou comest, and thy charger perforce must stand;
 Then bid thou the castle warder to let the drawbridge fall
 And open to thee the portals, then ride thou unto the hall.'
 Then he did as the Fisher bade him, and leave would he courteous pray,
 But he quoth, 'I myself will thine host be, an thou fail not to find the way,
 Be thy thanks then as is our tendance—As thou ridest around the hill
 Have a care lest the wood mislead thee, such mischance would but please me ill.'
 Then Parzival turned his bridle, and gaily he took his way,
 Nor missed he the path till before him the moat of the castle lay;

And the drawbridge was raised, and the fortress it lacked not for strength I trow,
As a turner with skill had wrought them stood the turrets in goodly row.
But with wings, or on winds of heaven uplifted, might ye have won
To that Burg, an a foeman stormed it little harm he methinks had done.
And so strong were the towers and the palace that its folk they had held the hall
And mocked at the foe, if all armies thirty years long beset the wall.
Then a squire looked forth from the castle, of the knight was he well aware,
And he asked whence he came? and wherefore he thought to their Burg to fare?
And Parzival spake, 'Tis the Fisher who hath bidden me ride to thee,
With all courtesy have I thanked him for the shelter he proffered free,
'Tis his will that the bridge be lowered, and I ride here the Burg within.'
'Sir Knight thou shalt here be welcome, and thy way to the Burg shalt win
Since the Fisher so spake—And honour would we shew unto thee his guest!'
Then the squire he let fall the drawbridge, for so was their lord's behest.
So the hero came to the fortress, to a courtyard so broad and wide,
By knightly sports untrodden—Nor oft would they Tourneys ride,
(By short green turf was it covered) and but seldom with banners bright
As on Abenberg's field did they ride there, as fitting for gallant knight.
'Twas long since they might disport them in such pastimes of warlike skill,
For sorrow lay heavy on them, and mirth it beseeemed them ill.
But little the guest should rue that, for knights both old and young,
They welcomed him with all honour, and swift to his bridle sprung.
And pages of noble breeding laid their hands on his bridle rein,
And others would hold his stirrup as the knight to dismount was fain.
And the knights they prayed him enter, and they led him where he might rest,
And with ready hands and skilful of his armour they freed the guest,
And they looked on the beardless hero, and they saw his face so fair,
And they spake, of a truth Good Fortune and blessing should be his share.
Then he bade them to bring him water, and the rust-stains he washed away
From face and hands, and they saw him as the light of a second day,
So he sat in all eyes lovely—Then a mantle rich they brought
Of silk of Araby fashioned, and flaw therein was there naught;
And he laid it around his shoulder, that hero so fair and bright,
But the clasp did he leave unfastened, and with one voice they praised the knight.
'Repanse de Schoie, our lady and queen, did this mantle bear,'
Quoth the chamberlain, 'She hath lent it while fit robes they for thee prepare.
And I feared not this boon to ask her since it seemeth sure to me
That a gallant man and faithful, Sir Knight, thou shalt prove to be!'
'God reward thee who lookest on me with such true and trusting heart,
Methinks, an thou seest rightly, Good Fortune shall be my part,
Yet I wot well such gifts come only from the power of God on high.'
Then gladly they pledged the hero, and in honour and loyalty
They who sorrowed with him were joyful; far more had they there, I ween,
Than at Pelrapär, when his right hand their shelter from grief had been!
Then sadly he thought, as his harness the squires on one side would bear,
That in knightly joust and Tourney he here might find little share.
Then one to the host would call him, and fast came his words and free,
And boldly he spake to the stranger, yea, e'en as in wrath might be.
With his life had he nigh paid forfeit to Parzival's youthful pride,
For he laid his hand to his sword-hilt—When he found it not by his side
Then he clenched his fist so tightly that the clasp rung the blood-drops red
From beneath his nails, and crimson to the sleeve of his robe they spread.
'Nay, nay,' quoth the knights, 'be not wrathful, for fain would he make us smile,
He hath licence to jest, and with jesting our sadness would he beguile.
Show thy courtesy here towards him, nor be wroth for a foolish word,

That the Fisher hath come to the castle, naught else shalt thou here have heard.
Now do thou to our lord betake thee, here art thou an honoured guest,
And the load of thy heavy anger be banished from off thy breast.
To the palace hall they gat them, where a hundred crowns hung low
With many a taper laden; round the walls shone the tapers' glow.
And beneath stood a hundred couches, with a hundred cushions fair,
And each of these goodly couches four knights should between them share.
And betwixt each twain of the couches an open space was found,
And before each there lay a carpet of cunning work fashioned round.
Thereto had he wealth in plenty, King Frimutel's son and heir:
And one thing had they not forgotten, nor their gold did they think to spare,
For within the hall were builded three hearths of marble rare,
With skill and wisdom fashioned, and each hearth stood four-square,
And the wood was Lignum aloe, and so great a fire, I ween,
Ne'er hath burnt on the hearth at Wildberg—Such things have aye costly been.
And the host had bid them lay him on a costly folding bed
'Fore the central hearth; and gladness from before his face had fled,
And his life was but a dying—Parzival the hero fair
In the hall found kindly welcome from him who had sent him there.
Then his host bade him stand no longer, but be seated his couch anear,
'Yea, here by my side, didst thou seat thee yet further from me, I fear
'Twere treating thee as a stranger'—In this wise to his gallant guest
Spake the host thus rich in sorrow, whose heart was by grief opprest.
And the host he craved thro' his sickness great fires, and warm robes would wear
Both wide and long, and with sable were they lined and garnished fair.
And the poorest skin was costly, and black was its hue and grey;
And a cap of the self-same fashioned he wore on his head that day,
'Twas within and without of sable, with bands of Arabian gold
Wrought around, and a flashing ruby in the centre might all behold.
Now many brave knights they sat there, and grief passed their face before,
For a squire sprang swift thro' the doorway, and a lance in his hand he bore,
(And thus did he wake their weeping) from the point did the blood run fast
Adown to the hand of the holder till 'twas lost in his sleeve at last.
And then thro' the lofty palace was weeping and wailing sore,
The folk of thirty kingdoms could scarce have bemoaned them more.
And thus to each of the four walls with the lance in his hand he drew,
Till he reached once again the doorway, and passed him the portal thro'.
And stilled was the lamentation, and the grief that this folk must know
When the squire bare the lance before them, and thus bade them to think on woe.
(An here ye be not outwearied I gladly would tell the tale,
How the feast in this Burg was ordered, for in courtesy naught did fail.)
At the end of the hall a doorway of steel did they open fair,
And two noble children entered—Now hearken what guise they bare,
An a knight for love would serve them, with love they his task might pay,
Two fair and gracious maidens as e'er man might woo were they.
And each wore on her hair loose flowing, a chaplet of blossoms bound
With silken band, beneath it their tresses sought the ground.
And the hand of each maiden carried a candlestick all of gold,
And every golden socket did a burning taper hold.
Nor would I forget the raiment these gentle maidens ware,
For one was Tenabroc's countess, ruddy-brown was her robe so fair,
And the self-same garb wore the maiden who beside the countess paced,
And with girdles rich and costly were they girt round each slender waist.
And behind them there came a Duchess and her fellow; of ivory white
Two stools they bare, and glowing their lips e'en as fire is bright.

Then they bowed, the four, and bending, the stools 'fore the host they laid,
Nor was aught to their service lacking, but fitly their part they played.
Then they stood all four together, and their faces were fair to see,
And the vesture of each fair maiden was like to the other three.
Now see how they followed swiftly, fair maidens twice told four,
And this was I ween their office, four tapers tall they bore;
Nor the others deemed too heavy the weight of a precious stone,
And by day the sun shone thro' it, and as Jacinth its name is known.
'Twas long and broad, and for lightness had they fashioned it fair and meet
To serve at will for a table where a wealthy host might eat.
And straight to the host they stepped them, and they bowed their fair heads low,
And four laid the costly table on the ivory white as snow,
The stools they had placed aforetime—and courteous they turned aside,
And there by their four companions stood the eight in their maiden pride.
And green were the robes of these maidens, green as grass in the month of May,
Of Samite in Assagog woven, and long and wide were they.
At the waist were they girt with a girdle, narrow, and long, and fair,
And each of these gentle maidens wore a wreath on her shining hair.
Now Iwan, the Count of Nonel, and Jernis, the lord of Reil,
To the Grail were their daughters summoned from many a distant mile.
And they came, these two princesses, in raiment wondrous fair,
And two keen-edged knives, a marvel, on cloths did those maidens bear.
Of silver white and shining were they wrought with such cunning skill,
And so sharp, that methinks their edges e'en steel might they cut at will.
And maidens four went before them, for this should their office be
To bear lights before the silver; four children from falsehood free.
Six maidens in all they entered and took thro' the hall their way,
Now hearken, and I will tell ye the service they did that day.
They bowed, and the twain who carried the silver they laid it low
On the Jacinth, and courteous turning to the first twelve in order go.
And now, have I counted rightly, here shall eighteen maidens stand;
And lo! see six more come hither in vesture from distant lands,
Half their robes were of silk, gold inwoven, half of silk of Nineveh bright,
For both they and the six before them, parti-coloured their robes of light.
And last of those maids a maiden, o'er the others was she the queen,
So fair her face that they thought them 'twas the morning's dawn, I ween!
And they saw her clad in raiment of Pfellel of Araby,
And she bare aloft on a cushion of verdant Achmardi
Root and blossom of Paradise garden, that thing which men call 'The Grail,'
The crown of all earthly wishes, fair fulness that ne'er shall fail!
Repanse de Schoie did they call her, in whose hands the Grail might lie,
By the Grail Itself elected was she to this office high.
And they who would here do service, those maids must be pure of heart,
And true in life, nor falsehood shall have in their dealings part.
And lights both rare and costly before the Grail they bore
Six glasses tall, transparent—and wondrous balsam's store
Burnt within with a strange sweet perfume; with measured steps they came,
And the queen bowed low with the maidens who bare the balsam's flame.
Then this maiden free from falsehood, the Grail on the Jacinth laid,
And Parzival looked upon her, and thought of the royal maid
Elect to such high office, whose mantle he needs must wear.
Then the seven courteous turned them to the eighteen maidens fair,
And the noblest they placed in the centre, and twelve on either side
They stood, but the crownèd maiden no beauty with hers had vied!

And as many knights as were seated around that palace hall,
So to each four was there a server, with golden beaker tall,
And a page so fair to look on who bare a napkin white—
Riches enow, I trow me, had ye seen in the hall that night!
And they bare there a hundred tables, at each table four knights would eat,
And swiftly they spread them over with coverings fair and meet.
The host himself took water, and heavy at heart was he,
And Parzival, too, he washed him, for so should the custom be.
A silken towel, bright coloured, a count's son would proffer fair,
Swift to the guest he gat him, and knelt low before him there.
And wherever there stood a table there four squires were ready dight
To serve the four who sat there, and their service they knew aright,
For twain would carve, low kneeling, and twain to the knights would bear
Of food and drink as needful, and thus for their wants would care.
Now hearken ye greater riches—on wheelèd cars were rolled
To every knight in order, fair vessels of wroughten gold,
And four knights set them on the tables, and with each ye a steward might see
To aid them, and claim the vessels when the feast at an end should be.
Now hearken another marvel—to a hundred squires they spake,
And they bade them in fair white napkins the bread from the Grail to take.
And straightway they went, and to each knight at each table the bread they bare;
As I heard so I tell unto ye, and the truth ye, each one, shall swear,
'Twas the Grail Itself that fed them, and before the Grail did stand
What of food or drink desiring, each one might stretch forth his hand.
(Would I here betray another then in sooth ye shall lie with me)
Food warm or cold, or dishes that known or unknown shall be,
Food wild or tame—Such riches ye never on earth shall find,
So many have said, yet I think me that folly doth rule their mind—
For the Grail was the crown of blessing, the fulness of earth's delight,
And Its joys I right well may liken to the glories of Heaven's height!
Then they brought in small golden vessels that which every man should need
Of sauces, or salt, or pepper—would one sparely or fully feed,
Yet each found enough—and courteous they bare to each noble guest;
And red wine and sweet drinks luscious, each one as he liked him best
Might speak the word, and proffer the cup, and behold! 'twas filled
By the power of the Grail—Thus the hunger of that gallant host was stilled,
And the Grail Itself sustained them, and Parzival wondering saw
The riches and mighty marvels, yet to question his host forbore.
And he thought, 'Gurnemanz he bade me, in truth, without thought of guile,
To withhold my lips from question—If here I abide awhile
Methinks it will then befall me as aforetime in Graharz land,
They will tell me, without my question, how here with this folk it stands.'
Then e'en as he sat thus musing came a squire who a sword did bear,
And its sheath was a thousand marks' worth, and its hilt was a ruby rare,
And the blade, it might well work wonders—Then the host gave it to the knight,
And he spake, 'I full oft have borne it in many a deadly fight
Ere God's Hand thus sorely smote me; now with this shalt thou be repaid
If aught hath in care been lacking—Henceforth shalt thou bear this blade
Whatever chance befall thee, and when thou its power hast tried
Thou wilt know thou art fully armèd, whatever strife betide.'
Ah! woe to the guest that asked not, I am sorrowful for his sake,
When his hand clasped the sword 'twas a token that his silence he well might break.
For the host too my heart is heavy, thus tortured by nameless woe,
And a question therefrom had freed him, yet to question his guest was slow.

But now the feast was ended, who the vessels hither bore
Again to their task they turn them, and they bear them forth once more.
The cars again they circle; each maid to her task was fain
From last to first; the noblest she turned to the Grail again,
To host and guest all-courteous the queen and her maidens bend,
What they brought they once more would bear forth thro' the door at the high hall's end.
And Parzival he gazed after, and lo! thro' the open door
Within an outer chamber, on a folding couch he saw
The fairest of old men ancient whom ever his eyes had seen,
Grey was he as mists of morning—Nor o'er rash is the tale, I ween,
Who he was shalt thou know hereafter, when a fitting time shall be,
The host, his Burg, and his kingdom, yea, all will I name to ye,
And all shall be clear and in order, no halting my tale shall know;
Methinks that I then shall show ye the bowstring without the bow.
'Tis a symbol good, the bowstring, for swift as ye deem the bow,
Yet the shaft that the bowstring speedeth findeth swifter its aim, I trow!
And not without thought I said it, for the string, it seemeth me,
Is like to the simple story wherewith men well-pleased shall be;
For it goeth straight to its ending, while he who aside shall stray,
Tho' his goal at last he reacheth findeth all too long his way.
When unbent the bow thou sawest, then straight was, I ween, the string,
From the straight line thou erst must draw it, ere the shaft to its goal may wing.
But he who his story aimeth at the ear of a fool shall find
His shaft go astray, for no dwelling it findeth within his mind.
Too wide is the road, I think me, and that which he chance to hear
Ere yet he may know the meaning flies out at the other ear.
Far rather at home I 'ld bide me than in such ears my story tell,
A beast, or a stock, I think me, as a hearer would serve as well.
But further I fain would tell ye of this people so full of woe
To whom he had come, our hero, glad song might they seldom know,
Or sound of dance or of Tourney; so heavy were they at heart
That never a thought of gladness might find in their life a part,
And oft shall the folk be fewer yet of joy shall have fuller share,
But here every nook was crowded, nor space in the court to spare.
The host to his guest spake kindly, 'Methinks they thy couch have spread,
Art thou weary? then list my counsel, and get thee, my guest, to bed.'
(Now here might I raise my war-cry at the parting betwixt the twain,
For I wot well that bitter sorrow each must from the venture gain.)
To the side of his host he stepped him, Parzival the fair of face,
And the Fisher a fair night wished him—Then the knights stepped each from his place,
And a part drew near towards him, and they led the stranger guest
Straightway to a sleeping chamber, and goodly should be his rest.
'Twas richly decked for his honour, and the couch it was spread so fair
That my poverty sorely grieves me since the earth doth such riches bear.
And that bed knew, I ween, no lacking, and a rich silk above it lay,
Bright-coloured its hue, and glowing as tho' fire-light did on it play;
Then Parzival prayed the heroes to get them again to rest,
For he saw there but one couch only, and they passed hence at his behest.
But he lacked not for other service—His fair face and tapers light
Gave challenge unto each other—What day e'er might shine so bright?
And before his couch was another, thereon would he take his seat
While pages drew them nearer, and proffered him service meet.
And they bared his white feet comely, and they laid his robes aside,
And of noble birth were these children, and fair in their youthful pride.
Then there passed thro' the open doorway four maidens fair and bright,

They would know if they well had served him, and if soft lay the stranger knight.
 And so the venture telleth, a squire a taper bare
 Before each gentle maiden—Parzival, that hero fair,
 Sprang swift to his couch; then the maidens with gentle voice they spake,
 'Sir Knight, we fain would pray thee for our sake awhile to wake'—
 Yet as children sport with each other had he hidden him from their sight
 Ere yet they might hear his greeting, yet their eyes had found swift delight,
 And their heart's desire was quickened at the sight of his red lips' glow
 That for youth were as yet unhidden, for no hair did upon them grow.
 Now hear what they bare, these maidens, three in their hands so white
 Brought syrups sweet, and red wine, and the fourth, that maiden bright,
 Bare fruit that e'erwhile had ripened in the garden of Paradise
 On a cloth fair and white, and she knelt low before him that maiden wise,
 And he bade her sit, but she answered, 'Nay, Sir Knight, so is it best
 For else were I sure unworthy to serve such a gallant guest.'
 Then he drank and would eat a little, and he spake to them soft and sweet,
 And he laid him adown, and the maidens craved leave of him as was meet.
 Then down on the costly carpet the squires set the tapers bright
 When they saw that he slept, and swiftly they gat from the gallant knight.
 Yet Parzival lay not lonely, for until the dawn of day
 Heart-sorrow would lie beside him, nor passed with the dawn away.
 And every coming anguish its heralds before would speed,
 E'en so that the fair youth's vision out-weighed e'en his mother's need
 When she dreamed ere the death of her husband. As a carpet unrolled his dream,
 The centre of fair jousts woven, while the edge was with swords a gleam.
 And in slumber his foemen pressed him, and would swiftly upon him ride;
 So fearful his dream that, wakened, thirty times had he rather died.
 Thus fear and unrest awoke him, and the sweat streamed from every limb;
 The daylight shone fair thro' the windows, yet no voice had called on him.
 Then he spake, 'Where are now the pages, who stood before me of late?
 Who shall hand unto me my garments?' Then awhile would he patient wait
 Till slumber again o'ercame him; none spake, none aloud would cry,
 Vanished the folk—When he wakened the noon-tide sun was high.
 Then he sprang up, and lo! before him on the carpet his harness lay,
 And two swords, his host's gift, and the other from Prince Ither he bare away.
 Then he spake to himself, 'Now wherefore was this done? I these arms will take,
 In sleep I such anguish suffered, methinks that I surely wake
 To-day to some task of knighthood—If mine host doth some foeman fear
 Then his will will I do right gladly, and faithful her prayer will hear
 Who of true heart this mantle lent me—If my service she think to take
 Then I were for such service joyful; yet not for her sweet love's sake,
 For my wife hath a face as lovely as ever this castle's queen,
 Nay more, an the truth be spoken she is fairer far I ween!'
 Then he did e'en as seemed him fitting, and he armed himself for fight
 From foot to head, and beside him he girded those swords of might.
 Then forth went the gallant hero, and his steed to the palace stair
 Was bound, shield and spear stood by it, and he joyed as he found them there.
 Then ere Parzival, the hero, his charger would mount again,
 He sought thro' many a chamber, and he called on the folk amain,
 But none might he see or hearken, and it vexed the knight full sore,
 And wrathful he grew—Yet seeking, the hero he came once more
 To where he at eve dismounted when first he the castle found,
 And the earth and grass were trampled, and the dew brushed from off the ground.
 Then, shouting, he turned, the young knight, once more to his charger good,
 And with bitter words he mounted—Wide open the gateway stood,

And the track led across the threshold; nor longer he thought to stay
 But he turned his rein, and swiftly to the drawbridge he made his way,
 But a hidden hand drew the rope taut, and the forepart it rose on high
 And well-nigh had his charger fallen, then he turned him right speedily
 For fain would he ask the meaning, but the squire cried aloud in scorn,
 'Goose that thou art, ride onward, to the sun's hate hast thou been born!
 Thy mouth hadst thou thought to open, of these wonders hadst asked thine host,
 Great fame had been thine—But I tell thee now hast thou this fair chance lost!'

Then the guest cried aloud for his meaning, but answer he ne'er might win,
 For the squire made as if he slumbered, and the portal he barred within.
 Too early for peace his parting, and the hour it hath brought him woe,
 And he payeth in joy the tribute, nor longer may gladness know;
 And doubled the throw of sorrow since here he had found the Grail,
 With his eyes, not his hand, had he cast it, and dice to the throw should fail.
 If by grief he be now awakened such was never his wont of yore,
 For naught had he known but gladness, nor sorrow of heart he bore.
 On the track that he saw before him would Parzival ride apace,
 And he thought, 'They who go before me to-day will a foeman face
 And fight for their master's honour; an they knew it, their ring of might
 Methinks would be little weakened if I in their ranks should fight!
 I would waver not, but would aid them whate'er be their need to-day,
 Thus my bread would I earn, and this fair sword, the gift of my host, repay,
 Undeserved as yet do I bear it—Sure they hold me for coward knight!'

Then he turned him, the free from falsehood, where the hoof-tracks still met his sight,
 (And sorely I rue his parting—Now the venture doth grow apace.)
 They had parted who rode before him, and their track he might scarcely trace,
 What aforetime was broad waxed narrow till he lost it nor found it more
 And tidings he heard, the hero, that wrought to him sorrow sore.
 For the young knight, rich in courage, heard a woman's voice make moan.
 (On the grass lay the dew of morning.) On a linden there sat alone
 A maiden, whose truth wrought her sorrow, for between her arms so white
 Embalmed did she lifeless hold him who living had been her knight.
 Were there one who saw her sorrow and mourned not for her bitter woe
 Then false of heart must I hold him, one who true love might never know!
 Then he turned his steed towards her, tho' as yet unknown was she,
 (Tho' the child of his mother's sister)—As the wind that fleeteth free
 Is all earthly faith to her true love—Then Parzival greeting spake,
 'Lady, methinks that sorrow I must bear for thy sorrow's sake,
 An thou needst in aught my service, would it free thee from further ill,
 Then look thou on me as thy servant, thy grief were I fain to still!'

Then sadly her thanks she bade him, and asked him, 'Whence camest thou here?
 He were ill-advised who his journey should take thro' this woodland drear.
 To them who know not its pathways great evil might here betide.
 Yea, oft have I seen and hearkened how men in this wood have died,
 For death was in strife their portion—Turn hence then, thou gallant knight,
 An thou lovest life—Yet tell me in what shelter didst pass the night?'

'But a mile from here stands a castle, there I thro' the night abode,
 And naught have I seen like its riches, from thence in short space I rode.'
 Then the maiden she looked upon him, and she spake, 'Now, methinks, 'twere ill
 With falsehood to thus betray them who trust thee with right goodwill.
 From thy shield art thou here a stranger, and canst naught but woods have found,
 An here thou hast ta'en thy journey from planted and builded ground,
 For thirty miles round have they never, for a dwelling, hewn wood or stone,
 Save but for one Burg, in this region that Burg it doth stand alone.
 'Tis rich in all earthly riches, yet he who that castle fair

Would seek, he may never find it, tho' many that quest shall dare.
 Unawares must they chance upon it, for I wot in no other wise
 Shall that Burg and all that it holdeth be looked on by mortal eyes.
 Sir Knight, *thou* hast never seen it; Monsalväsche I ween its name,
 Terre de Salväsche the kingdom where its lord the crown may claim,
 And Titurel once bequeathed it to his son King Frimutel,
 So they called him, the dauntless hero; much fame to his portion fell,
 In a joust was he slain at Love's bidding, and four children fair he left,
 And three, they have store of riches, yet are they of joy bereft.
 And poor is the fourth, for penance hath he chosen this lot I trow,
 Trevezent is his name—Anfortas, his brother, hath grief enow,
 He can neither stand, nor be seated, nor walk, but must aye recline,
 At Monsalväsche he hath his dwelling, the head of that noble line.
 Then she spake, 'If indeed thou camest to that folk who so sore doth mourn
 Then perchance is their king released from the burden he long hath borne?'
 Out spake the Waleis, 'I saw truly great marvels, and many a maid
 Of beauty rare'—she knew him by his voice ere the words were said.
 And she quoth, 'Now indeed I know thee, for in sooth art thou Parzival!
 Didst thou see the mournful monarch? Didst thou see the wondrous Grail?
 Ah! tell me the joyful tidings, may his woe at last be stilled?
 Well is thee that the blessed journey thou hast ta'en, now shall earth be filled,
 As far as the winds of heaven may blow, with thy fair renown;
 Naught on earth but shall do thee service, fulfilment each wish shall crown.'
 Then Parzival spake in wonder, 'Say, Lady, whence knowest thou me?'
 And she answered, 'I am that maiden who erewhile made her plaint to thee,
 I am she who thy name first told thee, near of kin to that gracious queen
 Thy mother, of all earth's blossoms the fairest flower, I ween,
 Tho' a flower that the dew ne'er nourished! May God reward thee well
 Who didst truly mourn my hero who in knightly combat fell.
 See, here in my arms I hold him, now think thou upon the woe
 God hath laid for his sake upon me who too short a life must know;
 Rich was he in all manly virtues, his death it has wrought me pain,
 And day by day as it dawneth reneweth my plaint again!
 'Alas! is it thou, Siguné? Say, where are thy lips so red
 That gave me to wit so truly who I was? From thy youthful head
 Have thy locks so brown and waving been shorn since I saw thee last;
 Then wert thou still fair to look on, tho' sorrow might hold thee fast,
 Now pale art thou waxed and feeble, such friendship, methinks with woe
 Had vexed me too much, hear my counsel, and bury this dead knight low!
 Great tears bedewed her garments, for ne'er to that maiden fair
 Had any given such counsel as Lunete to her lady bare.
 (This rede did she give to her lady, 'Let him live who thy lord hath slain,
 Thou shalt in his love hereafter amends for thy sorrow gain.')
 Not such was the will of Siguné, as maidens of wavering mind,
 (On their names I had best keep silence) here the tale of true love ye'll find.
 Then she spake, 'If joy e'er befall me that shall be when I know relief
 Is his, who so long hath suffered, when is lightened his load of grief.
 If thro' *thee* he hath found this succour then in truth shall all praise be thine;
 Methinketh e'en now at thy girdle do I see his sword to shine—
 If its magic spell thou knowest then to strife mayest thou fearless fare,
 For its edge is keen—Its maker a noble name doth bear,
 Trebuchet's hand hath wrought it; by Karnant there flows a spring,
 And '*Lac*' from the name of that streamlet methinks is he named, the king.
 The sword will withstand the first blow, at the next it will break in twain,
 An thou to these waters bring it from their flow 'twill be whole again.

Yet where at its source the streamlet flows forth from its rocky bed,
 Shalt thou seek those healing waters ere the sun stand high overhead.
Lac is the name of that fountain—If unsplintered shall be the blade
 Then press thou its halves together, from the waters shall it be made,
 Not whole alone, but stronger the blade and the edge shall grow,
 Nor their brightness and fair adorning be dimmed by the water's flow.
 Yet a spell thou first must master, ere thou draw that sword of might,
 Thou hast left it behind, I fear me! Hast thou learnt its words aright,
 Then in truth all earthly blessings shall blossom and bear for thee—
 Believe me, dear my cousin, what of marvels thou there couldst see,
 To thine hand shall they all do service; the crown of blessings fair
 Uplifted o'er all earth's noblest henceforward thine head shall bear.
 And thine is desire's fulfilment, and none with thy wealth and might
 May measure himself, if the question hath won at thy lips its right!
 Then he quoth, 'Nay, I asked no question!' 'Alas I' cried the mournful maid,
 'That ever mine eyes have seen thee, who to question wast sore afraid!
 Such marvels they there have shown thee, yet no word might they win from thee,
 When thou sawest the Grail, and those maidens who serve It, from falsehood free,
 Fair Garschiloie, and yet fairer Repanse de Schoie the queen.
 Thou hast seen the knives of silver, thou the bleeding spear hast seen—
 Alas! wherefore hast thou sought me? Dishonoured, accurst art thou
 Who bearest wolf's fang empoisoned! And deep in thine heart I trow
 Is it rooted, the plant of falsehood, and afresh doth it ever spring!
 Thou shouldst have had pity on him, Anfortas, their host and king,
 And have asked of his bitter sorrow, on whom God hath a wonder sped,
 Now thou livest, and yet I tell thee to bliss art thou henceforth dead!'

Then he spake, 'Nay, gentle cousin, show kindness to me I pray,
 If in aught I have sinned, repentance my sin sure shall put away.'
 'Little good may repentance do thee,' quoth the maiden, 'for well I know
 That thy knightly fame and honour at Monsalväsch were laid alow.
 And never a further answer or word shalt thou win from me.'
 Then Parzival turned his bridle and left her right mournfully.
 That his lips were so slow to question when he sat by the mournful king,
 To the heart of the gallant hero must sorrow and rueing bring;
 And thus thro' his heavy trouble, and the heat of the summer's day,
 Great sweat-drops stood on his forehead as he rode on his lonely way.
 For the sake of the air he loosened his helmet and visor band,
 And his face shone fair thro' the iron-rust as he carried them in his hand.
 Then he saw a fresh track, and before him short space did two horses fare,
 A war-horse was one, well harnessed, but unshod was, I ween, the mare,
 And it bare on its back a woman—Behind her he took his way,
 And he looked on her steed, to hunger o'er-long had it been a prey;
 Thro' its skin might its ribs be counted, a halter of hemp its rein,
 Its colour was white as an ermine, to the hoofs hung the untrimmed mane;
 The eyeballs were sunk in the sockets, the hollows were deep and wide,
 And I ween that this lady's palfrey by famine had oft been tried.
 'Twas lean and dry as touchwood, 'twas a marvel it yet could go,
 For little should she who rode it of the care of a charger know.
 Narrow and poor the trappings that lay on that charger's back,
 The saddle and bells were shattered, and much did the harness lack;
 And the lady was sad, not joyful, and her girth was a hempen cord,
 Yet, I ween, was her birth too noble in such guise to ride abroad.
 By twigs and thorny branches tattered her shift and torn,
 And the rags had she knit together where'er it had been out-worn,
 But beneath her skin gleamed spotless, white as the swan's white wing;

And naught but rags was her clothing—where they might some shelter bring
 There her skin was fair to look on, but elsewhere 'twas by sunburn dyed.
 Yet her lips were red, tho' sorrow and want she must long abide,
 And so glowing and bright their colour a fire had ye kindled there,
 And where-e'er one would ride beside her on that side had ye found her bare.
 Yet of base degree to hold her were to do her a wrong, I ween,
 Tho' little had she upon her, yet guiltless she aye had been—
 (Of your courtesy shall ye heed me, she forgot not her womanhood)
 Of her poverty have I told ye, yet wherefore? If ye deem good
 Then this will I say, that ragged and bare I this dame would take
 O'er many a well-clad maiden, were it fitting my choice to make.
 As Parzival bade her greeting, she saw him, and red she grew,
 Of all men was he the fairest, small marvel his face she knew.
 Then she quoth, 'Once before have I seen thee, great grief have I won thro' thee:
 God grant to thee greater honour than thou hast deserved from me!
 Far other hath been my raiment when thou sawest me last, I wot,
 Hadst thou ne'er in that hour come near me then honour were still my lot!'
 Then he spake, 'Now bethink thee, Lady, who thus should thy hatred claim,
 For never my hand, I think me, hath brought to a woman shame,
 (So had I *myself* dishonoured) since ever I bare a shield,
 Or thought upon deeds of knighthood, or hath striven in battle-field;
 Yet else am I sad for thy sorrow!' Then forth brake the tear-drops bright,
 And ran fast adown her bosom, and over her breasts so white,
 So fair, and so softly moulded, that never might turner's skill,
 Tho' swiftly he wrought and rounded, his task in such wise fulfil.
 And so lovely was she in her sorrow his heart was to pity fain,
 And with hands and arms a cover from his glance did she strive to gain.
 Then Parzival spake, 'Now, Lady, of true service from mocking free,
 In God's Name take thou here my surcoat, a covering 'twill be for thee.'
 'Nay, Sir Knight, I may never take it, e'en tho' bliss I thereby should gain,
 Ride swift on thy way, I pray thee, an thou wouldst not we both were slain;
 Tho' my death it would little grieve me, if I fear me, 'tis for thy sake!'
 'Say, Lady, who thus would wrong us? Who thinketh our life to take?
 'Twas God's hand that gave it to us—Nay, were they an armèd host
 Who here for our life were thirsting, I would face them nor fear the cost!'
 Then she spake, 'Tis a dauntless hero, so gallant in strife is he
 That heavy would be their labour if *six* should his foemen be;
 (I would thou wert not beside me) I aforetime his wife had been,
 Yet so poor am I now and wretched, for his slave were I all too mean,
 Thus his wrath doth he wreak upon me.' To that lady he spake again,
 'Say, who rideth here with thy husband? For if I to fly were fain,
 As here thou dost give me counsel, thyself sure wouldst deem it ill,
 Ere of flight I have learnt the lesson I would die with a right good will!'
 Then out spake the Duchess sadly, 'Alone with my lord I fare,
 But yet that may little serve thee, nor shall victory be here thy share.'
 And in rags was all her vesture, and naught but the hem untorn,
 Yet the crown of woman's honour in her poverty had she worn,
 And her ways were ways of goodness, and falsehood afar had fled—
 Then he bound afresh his visor and the helmet upon his head
 As one who to battle rideth—Then his charger aloft would rear,
 It was 'ware of the steed beside it, and its neigh rang out loud and clear;
 And he who a space before them on the woodland way would ride,
 He hearkened the sound, and would see him who rode there by his lady's side.
 Then he turned his bridle wrathful by the side of the narrow way,
 And with lance in rest for jousting Duke Orilus rode that day,

And manly, I ween, his bearing, from Gaheviess came his spear,
 And weapon alike and harness of one colour were blazoned clear.
 His helmet, Trebuchet wrought it; the shield in distant Spain
 Was welded fair for the hero, King Kaillet in that land doth reign,
 And strong were the rim and the centre—In Alexandria's city fair
 Was the costly pfellel woven that for surcoat and coat he ware.
 The covering of his charger at Tenabroc was it made
 Of rings of steel close welded—And thus he his pride displayed,
 For over the iron cover lay a pfellel so fair to see,
 And all men who saw bare witness that costly its worth must be—
 And gorget, and greaves, and headgear, tho' rich, yet their weight was light,
 And many a plate of iron it guarded this gallant knight;
 In Beälzenan was it fashioned, chief city of fair Anjou.
 (But she who rode bare behind him far other her garb to view,
 For in sooth might she find none better) from Soissons his breastplate came,
 But he won his gallant charger from the far-off lake Brimbane,
 In the mountains of Monsalväsch—Lähelein, his brother bold,
 In a joust o'erthrew the rider, and the steed as his prize would hold.
 And Parzival too was ready—his charger in onward flight
 'Gainst Orilus of Lalande bare swiftly the gallant knight;
 And he saw on his shield a dragon, yea, e'en as it were alive,
 And another upon the helmet fast bounden did upward strive.
 And many small golden dragons on surcoat and robe he bare,
 Enriched with many a jewel, and with red eyes of ruby fair.
 From afar would they make their onslaught, these dauntless heroes twain,
 No need to renounce their friendship, nor thro' kinship from strife refrain,
 Aloft flew the spears in splinters—Methinks I might vaunt me well
 If I such a joust had witnessed as here in this wood befell!
 Thus they rode at swiftest gallop not one joust alone, I ween,
 And Jeschuté at heart bare witness fairer jousting she ne'er had seen;
 So she stood, and her hands she wrung them, this lady of joy bereft,
 Nor harm did she wish to either, that one should be lifeless left.
 In sweat were they bathed, the chargers, and the knights they strove for fame,
 And sparks sprang bright from the sword-blades, and forth from the helm flashed flame,
 And the blows fell fierce and mighty, and far flashed the light of strife,
 None were better than they in battle, and they met here for death or life,
 And tho' willing and swift the chargers that the heroes would here bestride,
 They forgot not their spurs, and their sword-blades bright-glancing they deftly plied.
 And Parzival won him honour, for here hath he rightly shown
 How before a hundred dragons one man well might hold his own.
 And ill did it fare with one dragon, and sore were its wounds that day,
 'Twas the crest that aloft in glory on Orilus' helmet lay,
 And so clear that the light shone thro' them were the costly jewels bright
 That fell when the helm was smitten by Parzival's sword of might;
 'Twas on horse, not afoot, that they fought thus—The love of her angry lord
 Was won back again for Jeschuté by the play of the glittering sword.
 Then they dashed again on each other so close that they smote away,
 With their knees, the rings of iron—So valiant in strife were they!
 I will tell ye why one was wrathful; that his lady of royal race
 Ere this had been shamed; her guardian, from him might she look for grace;
 Yet he deemed that with wandering fancy her heart from her lord had strayed,
 And that she, in the love of another, her honour had lowly laid.
 And he would for such wrong have vengeance, and his judgment on her was done
 In such wise, save were *death* her portion no woman such woe had won,
 And yet she in naught had wronged him—If his favour he would withhold,

What man e'er might think to hinder? For ever from days of old
 The man hath power o'er the woman, the husband shall rule the wife.
 Yet Parzival the hero, he thought him to win with strife
 For Jeschuté her husband's favour—Methinks one should pray such grace
 In courteous wise, but flattery it here found but little place.
 And both they were right, I think me—He who ruleth the ways of life,
 Or straight they may be or crooked, 'twas His so to rule their strife
 That never to one nor the other the joust death for guerdon brought,
 Harm enow had they done to each other the while they so fiercely fought.
 Now hotter it waxed, the conflict, each hero would fain defend
 His knightly fame 'gainst the other; Duke Orilus of Lalande,
 He fought with the skill and cunning his hand had learnt of yore,
 For I ween none like him had battled—he had courage and strength in war,
 And therefore had he been victor on many a foughten field,
 Tho' other were here the ending—His foe would he force to yield;
 And he threw his arms around him, the hero so proud and bold,
 But Parzival, little daunted, on his foeman made good his hold,
 And he drew him from off his saddle; as a sheaf from the field ye reap
 So beneath his arm he swung him, and light from his horse did leap.
 O'er a fallen tree he held him, for here was he overthrown
 Who never of need or peril such fortune before had known.
 'Now do penance for this thine anger that hath wrought to thy lady woe,
 An thy favour be yet withholden, then death shalt thou surely know!'
 'Nay, nay, not so swift,' quoth his foeman, Duke Orilus of Lalande,
 'Tho' o'erthrown, I am not so vanquished that I may not thy will withstand!'
 Then Parzival, strong and valiant, his foeman he gripped amain,
 And forth thro' the visor gushing streamed the blood in a crimson rain,
 And the prince, I ween, was vanquished, he could win from him what he would,
 To die was he all unwilling, and he spake to the hero good,
 'Alas! thou bold knight dauntless, who evil on me hath sped,
 Say how have I earned this peril, to lie here before thee, dead?'
 Then Parzival quoth, 'Right gladly, Sir Knight, will I let thee live,
 If favour and love to thy lady thou swearest again to give!'
 'That I will not! Her sin against me I trow all too great shall be.
 Rich in honour she was; she hath injured herself, and she plungeth me,
 Her lord, in yet deeper sorrow. In all else thy will I'll heed,
 An thou thinkest my life to leave me—'Twas God gave it me indeed,
 Now thine hand is become His servant, to give it to me anew,
 And I to thy valour owe it'—In this wise spake the hero true:
 'For my life will I give fair ransom, for kingdoms twain, I trow,
 My brother with might hath won him, of riches he hath enow.
 Thou shalt ask as it best may please thee: if from death thou wilt set me free,
 He loveth me, and will loose me whatever the cost may be.
 And my Dukedom again as thy vassal will I take from thy valiant hand,
 Thy fame it shall gain new lustre, since I might not thy power withstand.
 Now release me, thou hero dauntless, from forgiveness of her, my wife;
 Whatever shall be for thine honour, by that will I buy my life,
 But with her, my dishonoured Duchess, at peace will I never be,
 Nay, not for all pain or sorrow that shall otherwise fall to me!'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Folk or kingdoms, or riches or jewels rare,
 All these they shall nothing profit—Thy pledge thou to me shalt swear
 In naught to delay thy journey, but to haste thee to Brittany
 Where dwelleth a gentle maiden—One hath smitten her sore for me,
 And I will on that man have vengeance, an his safety she shall not pray—
 Thy pledge and my loyal service bear thou to that maid straightway,

Or here, without fail, I slay thee—To King Arthur and to his queen,
 To both shalt thou bear my greeting; well paid hath my service been,
 If they for that blow ill-smitten the maiden do well entreat.
 But first will I see that thou givest to this lady thine homage meet,
 And that without guile—Dost withstand me, and thinkest my will to dare,
 On a bier, and no more on a charger, from hence shalt thou lifeless fare!
 Now mark thou my words, for their doing a pledge shalt thou straightway give,
 And thy surety swear unto me, if longer thou fain wouldst live!’
 To King Parzival spake his foeman, Duke Orilus, ‘Helpeth naught
 ’Gainst this thy will, I will do it, for fain I my life had bought!’
 In the fear for the life of her husband Jeschuté, that lady fair,
 Mourned sore for his woe, yet the foemen to part might she little dare.
 Then Parzival bade him rise up, and speak to his lady bright
 The words of peace and of pardon; and thus quoth the vanquished knight,
 ’Lady, since this my shaming in strife hath been for thy sake,
 So be it, the kiss of forgiveness from my lips shalt thou herewith take.
 Thro’ thee have I lost much honour—What boots it? I pardon sware!’
 Then swift from her steed on the meadow sprang the lady with white limbs bare,
 Tho’ the blood that ran from his nostrils had dyed his mouth with red,
 Yet she kissed him e’en as he bade her, so was Parzival’s bidding sped.
 Then the three rode on together till a hermit’s cell they saw
 In the rocky wall, and our hero his bridle was fain to draw;
 For he saw there a shrine so holy, and a spear with fair colours blent
 Stood beside the shrine; ’twas the dwelling of the hermit Trevrezent.
 There Parzival dealt with honour—On the relic an oath he sware,
 Himself laid the oath upon him, and he spake and they hearkened fair;
 ’If I have worth or valour, as ’seemeth a gallant knight—
 If I have it or not let those witness who have looked on my shield in fight;
 Yea, let them approve my knighthood, for knighthood’s power may claim,
 As the shield-bearer oft shall tell us, high guerdon of praise and fame,
 And the name of knight is honoured—My body to shame for aye
 Will I give, and my fame and honour henceforth shall be put away;
 (With these words I my bliss would pledge here in the Hand that shall highest be,
 And that Hand is God’s Hand, I think me)—All loss, bitter mockery,
 In this life and the next be my portion from His power, if this lady fair
 E’er did thee wrong when it chanced her that the clasp from her robe *I* tare—
 (Of a token of gold I robbed her)—A *fool* and no man was I,
 Not yet had I waxed to wisdom—And sore did she weep thereby,
 And anguish and grief she suffered; yea, guiltless was she that day—
 And forfeit my bliss and mine honour if the words be not truth I say!
 Now see, dost thou hold her guiltless thou shalt give her her ring again,
 From the clasp I in such wise parted that my folly must bear the blame!’
 Then the Duke took the ring, and the blood-stains he wiped from his lips away,
 And he kissed her, his heart’s best treasure—And a covering she won straightway;
 The ring he placed on her finger, with his surcoat her shame would hide,
 Tho’ hewn by the hand of hero, of rich silk was it fashioned wide.
 But seldom in coat emblazoned mine eyes have a woman seen,
 And this one was marred in combat. No war-cry was hers, I ween,
 That should summon the knights to Tourney, and never a spear she brake
 Whatever her garb—In Tourney far better the part they’ld take,
 Lambekine, methinks, and the good squire, if together they thought to fight—
 But now was the lady pardoned, and her sorrow had taken flight.
 Quoth Orilus, ‘Now, thou hero, the oath thou didst freely swear,
 Great joy and small grief hath brought me; tho’ shaming I needs must bear,
 Yet gladness therefrom I win me—In all honour I will repay

This lady true for her sorrow when I put her in shame away.
And since all alone I left her she was guiltless did aught betide;
Yet so did she speak of thy beauty, methought there was more beside.
But now may God reward thee, thou hast shown her from falsehood free,
I have done her a wrong—Thro' the young wood have I ridden in search of thee
Afar from Briziljan's forest.' Then Parzival took the spear,
Wild Taurian, Dodine's brother, erewhile had he left it here.
Now say where the heroes rested, or how they would pass the night—
Helmet and shield had suffered, they were shattered and hewn in fight.
Then Parzival to the lady, and her husband, a farewell bade;
The Duke to his hearth would bid him, 'twas in vain howsoe'er he prayed.
So here, as the venture telleth, they parted, those heroes twain,
And the Prince Orilus he sought him his pavilion and folk again.
And glad were his faithful people with one mind when at last they saw
Their lord and his gracious lady dwell in peace and in love once more.
Nor longer was there delaying, the Duke he aside would lay
His arms, and the rust and blood-stains from his face did he wash away;
By her hand he led the Duchess where atonement he fain would make,
Weeping she lay beside him for joy, not for sorrow's sake.
For such is the way of women, know ye not the saying well?
'Tearful eyes make sweet lips,' of such lore methinks I yet more might tell!
For Love knoweth joy as sorrow, and he who the twain would weigh
In a balance shall find them equal an he testeth the scales alway!
At peace were they now, full surely, forthwith to the bath they went,
Twelve fair maidens they waited on her, with them had she shared her tent,
They had tended her since, all guiltless, the wrath of her love she bare;
(At night might she lie well covered, tho' by day she ill-clad must fare)
And joyful they bathed their lady—But now are ye fain to hear
How Orilus won him tidings that King Arthur would now draw near.
For thus spake a knight to his master, 'On a grassy plain I saw
In fair and knightly order a thousand tents, yea, more,
For Arthur the noble monarch, the King of the Breton's land
With a wondrous fair host of maidens his court holdeth nigh at hand;
Methinks scarce a mile are they distant, nor shout of knights shall fail,
On either side Plimizöl's waters their camp lies adown the vale.'
Then the Duke in haste and gladness forth from his bath he stept—
Would ye know how she fared, Jeschuté? No longer the lady wept,
But she went, the fair and gentle, from her bath to her couch straightway,
And far fairer, I ween, her garments than she ware for many a day.
And closely they clung together, the prince and the princess wise,
And Love came to the aid of gladness, and joy here hath won the prize.
Then the maidens they clad their lady, but the knights their lord's armour brought,
And much had ye praised the vesture of Jeschuté, 'twas fairly wrought
And birds caught in snares they brought them, on their couch did they sit the twain,
And joyful they ate; many kisses from her lord did Jeschuté gain!
Then they brought to the lovely lady a palfrey, so strong and fair,
'Twas bridled, and richly saddled, and a lady right well might bear,
And they lifted her to the saddle, with her brave lord she hence would ride;
But his charger was armed, as for battle the knight would his steed bestride,
And the sword he that morn had wielded hung the saddle-bow before.
Then from foot to head well armèd he came forth to his steed once more,
And there, where his lady waited, to the saddle he sprung, the knight,
He would ride forth without delaying, with Jeschuté his lady bright.
But his folk should fare back to Lalande, save one knight who should show the way
To the camp and the court of King Arthur, so he counselled his folk that day.

Soon came they anear King Arthur, and his tents they right well espied,
 For the space of a mile they stretched them adown by the water's side.
 The knight who had led him hither he bade to his folk repair,
 No comrade he'ld have save Jeschuté, his lady so true and fair.
 And Arthur, the brave and humble, he sat where at eve he'ld eat,
 On a plain with his vassals round him, in order due and meet.
 Duke Orilus rode to their circle, and none might his blazon know,
 So hewn were both shield and helmet—'twas Parzival dealt such blow!
 From his horse sprang the gallant hero, Jeschuté she held his rein;
 Swift sprang the squires to aid them, and thronged close around the twain,
 And they spake, 'We will care for the horses,'—Orilus, on the grass he laid
 His shield so marred and splintered, and he asked of the gracious maid
 For whose sake he had ridden thither, and they showed him the lady's seat,
 Kunnewaaré she was of Lalande, and her mien for a maid was meet.
 Then, armed, he drew near unto them—King and queen bade him welcome fair,
 He thanked them, and to his sister his pledge was he fain to swear,
 But the maiden, right well she knew him by the golden dragon's shine,
 And she spake, 'Thou art sure my brother, Orilus, or Lähelein,
 And pledge will I take from neither, for both of ye aye were fain
 To render to me such service as I from your hands would gain.
 I were dead to all truth and honour if I dealt with thee as a foe,
 My courtesy sure were shamèd by my own hand, and laid allow.'
 Then the prince knelt before the maiden and he spake, 'Thou the truth hath said,
 I am Orilus thy brother; the Red Knight this oath hath laid
 On me that my pledge I yield thee, for so must I buy my life,
 Wilt thou take it, then have I done that which I sware after bitter strife.'
 Then his pledge, who had borne the dragon, in her white hand the maid must take,
 And she set him free, and he rose up, and thus to his sister spake:
 'Now to sorrow shall faith constrain me, alas! who hath smitten thee?
 The blows perforce must wound me—He who lusted thereto might see,
 If this were the hour for vengeance, that grief I with thee must share;
 And the bravest of men mourneth with me that ever a woman bare,
 He calleth himself the Red Knight—O king! he doth bid me greet
 Both thee and the queen thy lady, he doth offer ye service meet,
 As he fain would serve this my sister—His service ye will repay,
 If ye kindly entreat this maiden that her shaming be put away.
 And I, too, had fared far better at the hand of this dauntless knight,
 Had he known the maid for my sister, and her blows on my heart must light.'
 Now Kay, he hath earned fresh hatred from all who would there abide,
 Both knights and gentle ladies, by Plimizöl's flowing tide,
 From Iofreit the son of Idöl, from Gawain, and the vanquished king
 Klamidé, of whose sore peril I of yore unto ye would sing.
 And from many another hero whose names I right well had told,
 But o'er-long would it be my story—So they thronged round the hero bold,
 And, courteous, he took their service—his wife would they nearer bring,
 She sat as yet on her palfrey, and they welcomed her, queen and king.
 Then the women they kissed each other, and thus spake the king so true,
 'Thy father, King Lac of Karnant, for a gallant man I knew,
 For his sake I mourned thy sorrow when first men the tale did bear,
 Methinks that thy lord should have spared thee for the sake of thy face so fair!
 For the prize was thine at Kanedig thro' the light of thy beauty's ray,
 And the hawk didst thou win for thy fairness, on thine hand did it ride away.
 If Orilus wrong hath done me, yet I wished unto thee no ill,
 And never I liked his judgment; and so doth it please me still
 To see thee restored to favour, and clad in these garments fair,

As fitting thy state, O Lady! since woe thou o'er-long didst bear,
 And she quoth, 'Now may God reward thee, O Sire! for these words so true,
 That thy fame may wax the higher, and may blossom and bloom anew!'
 Then Jeschuté and her husband, the twain, she took by the hand,
 And forth from the circle led them, the maiden of fair Lalande.
 And near to the royal pavilion, where a stream from the meadow sprung,
 Stood her tent on the plain, and above it a wingèd dragon hung;
 Half an apple it held in its clutches, and four ropes did it draw on high,
 E'en as if the tent it lifted, and aloft to the clouds would fly.
 And Orilus thereby knew it, for the self-same arms he bare,
 And beneath it would they disarm him—Then his sister so true and fair,
 She gave him due care and honour, and the vassals, each one they spake,
 How the Red Knight's valour dauntless would Fame for its comrade take.
 As thus aloud men praised him, in Kingron's ear spake Kay,
 And he bade him do Orilus service—(Well he might, whom he thus did pray,
 For oft had he done such service for Klamidé in Brandigan.)
 And for this Kay would give his office to the hand of another man,
 His ill-star had bid him smite her, the prince's sister fair,
 So hard with his staff, 'twas fitting from their service he should forbear.
 Nor pardon she found for his trespass, this maiden of royal race;
 But viands he sent, and Kingron, he set them before their face.
 Kunnewaaré, the wise and gentle, with her slender hands and white,
 Would cut the food for her brother, at his side sat his lady bright.
 And Jeschuté of Karnant bare her with courteous and comely mien,
 And Arthur the King forgat not, for fain he the twain had seen,
 And he came where they sat together, and ate with right friendly will,
 And he spake, 'Be good service lacking, then for sure it shall please me ill,
 For ne'er hath a host received ye, I trow, with a will so good,
 And a heart so free from falsehood!' And he spake in kindly mood,
 'My Lady Kunnewaaré, see thou well to this gallant knight,
 And the blessing of God be on ye, and keep ye till morning light!'
 Then Arthur to rest betook him, and a couch for the twain they spread,
 And till daylight in peace they slumbered, and sorrow afar had fled.

BOOK VI ARTHUR

Now perchance it were well I should tell ye, how, as this his folk did pray,
 From Karidöl and his kingdom, King Arthur had ridden away.
 And now the venture telleth, on his own and on stranger ground
 For eight days long had they ridden, nor yet had the Red Knight found.
 For in truth 'twas for him they were seeking, to honour his hand were fain,
 From sorrow had he released them, who had erst Prince Ither slain;
 And Klamidé the king, and Kingron, in a welcome hour had sent
 To the court of the Breton Monarch: for on this was King Arthur bent,
 He would make him one of his circle, a knight of the Table Round,
 No labour too great he counted, so the hero at last he found!
 Thus o'er mountain and vale they sought him—All who knightly shield might bear,
 King Arthur now called around him, and in this wise he bade them swear:
 What deeds so e'er of knighthood they should see, by this their oath,
 They should on no conflict venture, but faithful still keep their troth,
 As they sware unto him, their monarch, and fight but as he thereto
 Should give them leave—He spake thus, 'Now, 'tis well! Since we needs must go
 Thro' many a stranger country, where many a stranger spear,
 And many a gallant hero are waiting us, I fear,
 If ye, like hounds untrained whose leash shall have slipped the hand
 Of him who was late their master, shall roam free o'er all the land,

Much evil might there befall ye, and such chance should but please me ill,
 And by this your oath, I think me, such rashness I best may still.
 Be ye sure and need ariseth, your king ne'er will say you Nay,
 Till then, as I here command ye, ride peaceful upon your way.'
 Now the oath, ye shall well have heard it—Now hear ye how Parzival,
 The Waleis, rode near unto them: thro' the night did the snow-flakes fall,
 Light they fell, yet lay thickly on him, yet if well I the tale may know,
 And the singer aright hath sung it, it was never the time of snow;
 For whate'er men have sung or spoken of King Arthur, at Whitsuntide,
 Or when May-blossoms deck the meadow, these marvels did aye betide.
 For sweetly the springtide bloometh, and many a garb, I ween,
 Shall it bear this song of my singing, tho' snow-clad it now be seen.
 The falconers from Karidöl, as the shadows of evening fell,
 Rode, hawking, by Plimizöl's waters, when an evil chance befell,
 For the best of their hawks flew from them, nor stooped to the lure again,
 But all night in the dusky shadows of the woodland it did remain.
 With Parzival it sheltered; to the twain was the woodland way
 A road unknown, sharp the frost stung, in the far east uprose the day,
 And, lo! all around the hero, the snow-flakes lay thick and white:
 Thro' the forest paths untrodden, in ever waxing light,
 Rode our hero by hedge or thicket, by rock and by fallen tree,
 Till clear grew the shadowy woodland, and its depths he well might see,
 And a mighty tree of the forest had fallen where he would ride,
 (The falcon yet followed after) 'mid its clustering boughs he spied
 A flock of wild-geese from the Northland, their hissing he first had heard,
 Swift swooped the falcon upon them and struck to the earth a bird:
 And scarce might it fly the clutches of its foe, and fresh shelter take
 'Neath the shade of the fallen branches; in its flight from the wounds there brake
 Three blood-drops, all glowing crimson, and fell on the spotless snow,
 As Parzival's eyes beheld them, swift sorrow his heart must know!
 Now hear ye his love so loyal—As he looked on these blood-drops bright,
 That stained with a stain of crimson the snow-flakes that lay so white,
 He thought, 'Say what hand hath painted these colours that here I see?
 Kondwiramur, I think well, these tints sure shall liken thee!
 And white snow and blood-drops crimson, do ever thy likeness share,
 For this favour I praise God's working, and the world he hath wrought so fair!
 For in this wise I read the vision,—in this snow that so spotless lies,
 'Gainst the blood-drops, that ruddy-gleaming, glow crimson beneath mine eyes,
 I find ever thy face so gracious, my lady, Kondwiramur,
 Red as blood-drops and white as the snowdrift, it rejoiceth me evermore!
 Then her sweet face arose before him, in that night she first sought his side,
 When on each cheek a tear-drop glistened, and a third to her chin did glide.
 And so true was his love and steadfast, little recked he of aught around,
 But wrapped round in love and longing, saw naught but the blood-stained ground.
 Frau Minne with force constrained him, as here on his wife he thought,
 And by magic of colours mystic, a spell on his senses wrought.
 So held he him still, as sleeping—Would ye know who found him there?
 The squire of fair Kunnewaaré would forth unto Lalande fare,
 And as on his way he journeyed, by the woodland green he saw
 A helmet all battle-dinted, and a shield which yet traces bore
 Of many a bitter conflict that was foughten for lady fair;
 And a knight there abode in armour, and his lance he aloft did bear
 As one who here patient waited the joust that he fain would ride.
 The squire swiftly turned his bridle and back to the camp he hied.
 Yet in sooth had he seen the stranger, and his lady's champion known,

He had ne'er been so swift to decry him, nor had wished he were overthrown,
Nor e'en as he were an outlaw, set the heroes upon his track:
The squire he of queen unfaithful, small wonder he knighthood lacked!
And in this wise he called upon them, 'Fie! Fie! on ye, coward knights!
Hold ye not Gawain for a marvel? Have ye not in a hundred fights
Won honour and fame as heroes, who fight for a hero king?
Know now that ye stand dishonoured, and broken your goodly ring!'
Ah! then there arose a clamour, and none but was fain to know
Of the deed of knightly prowess, that should shame their honour so.
When they heard how but one knight dared them, that but one knight a foe did wait,
Then sorely they mourned the promise that they sware to their king of late.
Then Knight Segramor sprang swiftly from amid the angry throng,
He ran, for in sooth he walked not, and ever his heart did long
To be in the midst of conflict, where conflict might chance to be,
An they failèd with cords to bind him, in the thick of the fight was he!
And nowhere the Rhine's swift waters may flow so strong and wide,
Tho' the stream should run swift between them, an men fought on the further side,
He stayed not to test the waters, if the current be hot or cold,
But straightway the stream he breasted, as fitted a swimmer bold!
Swift-foot to the tent of the monarch, the eager youth he sped,
For the day was but yet in its dawning, and the king he lay yet abed.
Then straight thro' the lists he hied him, and he gat him thro' the door,
And the covering all of sable, with hasty hand he tore
From the twain who lay warm beneath it, and slumbered a slumber deep,
Yet his haste moved them but to laughter, tho' he waked them from out their sleep!
And loudly he cried on his cousin—'Queen, Lady, Guinevere,
Since the world knoweth well our kinship, thou must do me this service here,
Speak thou for me to thine husband, and pray thou of him this grace,
Since a knightly venture nears us, my lot *first* the foe to face!'
Yet Arthur spake, 'Now bethink thee of the oath thou didst swear to me,
In all things my will to follow, nor rashly to venture thee;
For if thou a joust now ridest, hereafter shall many a knight
Crave leave at mine hand to ride forth, and seek for fame in fight,
And 'twere ill thus our force to weaken, for know thou that near at hand,
Anfortas of Monsalväsch with a mighty host doth stand.
This wood of his he guardeth, and since we but little know
Where he and his force shall hold them, such chance well might work us woe!'
Yet Guinevere wrought so wisely Segramor was well-nigh fain
To die of joy, from King Arthur, his lady this grace did gain.
And on fame and honour only was the gallant youth intent,
Nor for gold had he sold the venture on which his heart was bent.
Now the hero young and beardless, well armed his steed bestrode,
And over the fresh young greensward his charger at full speed rode;
And the bushes were bent beneath him, and the golden bells rang clear
On trapping alike and armour; and I deem well an need were here
To seek for the magic pheasant mid thicket and thorny brake,
He who fain this knight had followed, the bells for his guide might take!
Thus rashly rode the hero, to him whom Frau Minne's spell
Fast fettered in magic fetters, and no blow at the first there fell,
For the peace by his word was broken—There held fast by threefold might,
And the power of red blood-drops threefold stood ever the stranger knight.
(Yea, well I myself have known this, how Frau Minne with power may hold,
And holding, the senses scatter, and with passion of grief untold
Shall fill the heart to o'erflowing—'Twas a woman who wrought this ill,
And vanquished, she doth condemn me, and refuseth me comfort still.

Thus draweth she guilt upon her, for the sin shall be hers, I ween,
 And afar must I fly from the presence, that of old time my joy hath been.)
 Thus Segramor quoth unto him, 'Now it seemeth but ill to me
 That thus near our army lieth, and our presence rejoiceth thee!
 And thou holdest his fame too lightly, whom with pride we may hail our king,
 And 'tis meet thou for this do penance,—or the death-chime for me shall ring!
 Thus armed, all too near thou ridest; yet first would I courteous pray
 That thou yield thee at this my bidding, or my wrong will I here repay,
 And my blow shall be swift, and thy falling shall scatter these snow-flakes white!
 And I call on thee here to yield thee, ere I put thee to shame, Sir Knight!'
 Yet Parzival still kept silence—for Frau Minne, so fair and young,
 In a sorer conflict held him—Then his steed Segramor swung
 Aside, as for jousting ready, round wheeled him the war-horse good
 On whose back the gallant hero yet sate in mystic mood,
 And ever he gazed on the blood-drops; as his charger turned him round
 Awhile from his eyes they vanished, and fame in their stead he found!
 For swift as the blood-drops crimson thus passed from his dazzled sight,
 He hearkened the voice of the foeman, and braced him anew for fight.
 Then as Segramor rode against him, Parzival sought afresh the spear
 That he found by the woodland chapel, with blazon of colours clear;
 For tough was the shaft, and he gripped it, and he held the point full low,
 As his foeman dashed fair against him, his shield rang with the ringing blow.
 Then he spurred him anew to the onslaught, and the joust he so well repaid,
 That the knight in his golden armour was low in the snowdrift laid!
 Yet still was the spear unsplintered, tho' it bare him from off his horse;
 And Parzival still kept silence, and he wheeled him upon his course,
 And his eyes sought once more the blood-drops, and e'en as they met his sight
 Frau Minne with fetters bound him, and held him in cords of might,
 And he spake never word, nor question, but gazed ever upon the ground,
 And, dreaming, he lost the knowledge which he for a space had found!
 But affrighted, the gallant charger had fled back into its stall,
 And its rider arose, little comfort might he find, though he soft might fall!
 Outstretched had he lain in the snowdrift, in such wise e'en as men shall go
 To rest, yet but ill he sleepeth, who sleepeth on couch of snow!
 And such bed had sorrow brought me! for he to whom ill betides
 Hath but mocking for his bedfellow, but the lucky doth God's hand guide.
 So near was King Arthur's army, that right well might Parzival
 Be seen of all men, and the wonders, and the conflict that then befell.
 The victor by Love was vanquished, by Love that in days of old
 Did the king of all kings the wisest, King Solomon, captive hold!
 Short space, then, ere back to the army once more Knight Segramor came,
 An with praise or with blame they should greet him, he counted it still the same.
 And sharp words he flung among them, with mocking tongue and bold,
 Tho' vanquished, yet not dishonoured, must they ever the hero hold!
 And he quoth, 'Have ye never heard this, that strife bringeth loss as gain?
 And never a joust, I wot me, but the victor doth one remain,
 While one aye shall be the vanquished: The best ship in storm may sink,
 And I wot that ye ne'er have heard me to speak, for I ne'er did think,
 An he knew of my shield the blazon, he had faced me not as a foe!
 Much evil, in sooth, hath he wrought me, and yet doth he wait below
 All those who would ride against him, for he seemeth for conflict fain,
 An a knight should in joust o'erthrow him, such chance might he count for gain.'
 Then straightway unto King Arthur Sir Kay did the tidings bring,
 How his knight, Segramor, had fallen, and his victor, without their ring,
 A young knight, for jousting ready, yet waited with ill intent—

'Nay, I think an this stranger warrior of so many unpunished went,
 A burden both sore and shameful on our honour such lack would lay;
 Now, my king, an thou hold me worthy, do thou grant me this grace, I pray,
 I would ride hence to ask his meaning, who thus in the presence fair
 Of our Queen Guinevere and her maidens his lance-point aloft doth bear;
 But if thou shouldst this boon refuse me, then know, not another hour
 I abide here as this thy servant; for I hold that the knightly power
 And the fair fame of thy Round Table are stained if we delay
 To arm ourselves 'gainst the stranger who dareth our strength to-day!
 Now, I prithee, give leave to fight him—For tho' blind and deaf were we,
 Yet 'tis time that we should defend us'—'As thou willest, so let it be!'
 Then swift did the seneschal arm him, and I ween in fierce anger's fire
 A woodland he fain had wasted 'gainst the foe, who with strong desire
 And love was thus sorely burdened; for Frau Minne a magic spell
 Had wrought with the snow-flakes spotless, and the blood-drops that crimson fell.
 And his knighthood he sorely shamèd, who thought here to work him harm,
 Since he faileth true Love to honour, who denieth of Love the charm.
 Frau Minne, say, why dost thou make glad the souls that mourn
 With bliss that too swiftly fleeting, but leaveth them more forlorn?
 And how canst thou, Frau Minne, true worth and knightly fame,
 And manly strength and courage, thus vanquish and put to shame?
 For the least is to thee as the greatest, and the earth shall no hero boast,
 Who thinketh to scorn thine empire, but he learneth unto his cost
 That thou canst, an thou wilt, o'erthrow him; yea, all men thy power obey,
 For thy sceptre we own as mighty, and wide as the world its sway.
 Yet this one thing it doth thee honour, tho' thou rulest all else but ill,
 Joy maketh her dwelling with thee, and for this would I praise thee still!
 Frau Minne, alas! of old time full false were thy ways, I ween,
 Nor hast thou thy dealings mended, nor to-day hast thou truer been,
 Thou hast many a maiden shamèd, who love forbidden sought;
 Thro' thy dealings, upon the vassal, his lord hath sorrow brought;
 And the friend shall false and faithless to the friend of his bosom prove,
 And the servant betray his master; such deeds do but shame thee, Love!
 And I would that it were far from thee, the body to yield to lust,
 In such wise that the soul ashamed is stricken with sorrow's thrust,
 And that with force compelling, the young thou makest old,
 Though their years but few be counted, this must we for treason hold!
 Such speech, I ween, beseems not the man who in serving thee
 Hath comfort found! If succour thine hand ever brought to me,
 I had been less slow to praise thee, but sorrow and loss alone
 Hast thou counted to me as guerdon, and such glamour thine art hath thrown
 O'er mine eyes, that, methinks, henceforward I trust thee never more,
 Though small profit it brought unto thee, the bitter grief I bore!
 And yet too high above me art thou, that whate'er my wrong,
 I should e'en as a fool upbraid thee with bitter words and strong:
 For thy spear too sharply pierces, and scarce may we bear the weight,
 Thou layest at will upon us—Methinks he who sang of late,
 'Neath a tree, of thy mystic dealings, and thy wondrous ways of old,
 Had better done had he told us how we thy grace might hold!
 (Heinrich of Veldeck was he, and he taught us, I ween, right well
 Of the winning of Love, of its guarding, alas! he failed to tell.)
 For oft one thro' folly loses the prize that he late did win;
 Yea, to me hath such fate befallen, yet Frau Minne, *thine* was the sin!
 Since all wisdom shall be thy portion, since against thee nor spear, nor shield,
 Nor charger, nor guarded fortress their vaunted power can wield,

I know not what shall withstand thee, nor on earth, nor on the sea!
He who feareth to face thy conflict, say whither shall he flee?
'Twas thy mystic power, Frau Minne, that dealt thus with Parzival,
And reft him awhile of knowledge, and wrought with him as a fool.
For fair was the queen and gracious who reigned in far Pelrapär,
And she thought on her lord and husband, and she made thee her message bear.
And for this cause Kardeiss her brother, hast thou for thy payment slair,
And since thou such tribute askest, 'tis well that I ne'er have ta'en
From thine hand aught of good, since in such wise thou dost for thy debtors care—
This I spake for the sake of all men—List ye now how Sir Kay did fare:
Now he rode forth in knightly armour to the strife that he sore did crave,
And Gamuret's son, right willing, to his wish fulfilment gave.
And wherever fair maids compelling, their voices uplift in prayer,
And the grace they shall ask be granted, let them pray here for his welfare,
Since it was thro' a woman's beauty, that the spell of a woman wrought
Love's magic, of senses robbed him—Then his charger to halt Kay brought;
And he spake to the gallant Waleis, 'Sir Knight, since thou thus our king
Hast shamed, thou shalt hear my counsel, for wisdom perchance 'twill bring;
Thou shalt hang thee a hempen halter around thy neck straightway,
For so may I lightly lead thee, and take thou with me thy way.
Nor think thou, thou canst escape me, but with me unto my lord
Shalt thou go, as befits a captive, else worse may be thy reward!'
By love constrained, the Waleis nor word nor answer spoke,
Kay gripped his spear-shaft tightly and he smote with a mighty stroke
On the hero's head, till the helmet rang loudly beneath his hand;
And he quoth, 'Now will I awake thee! Dost think here to take thy stand,
And standing sleep unsheeted? Nay, other shalt thou fare,
Low on the snow I'll lay thee! The ass that is wont to bear
The sack from the mill would rue it, did one smite him in such wise,
As here I think now to smite thee, and thy sloth and thy sleep chastise!'
Frau Minne, now bethink thee, for sore this shameth thee,
For an one should wrong a peasant, in this wise his speech will be,
'My lord will sure repay thee!' Vengeance from thee he'd seek
Methinks, this gallant Waleis, an thou wouldst let him speak!
Now let him from out thy circle, and loose him from thy ban,
This stranger guest shalt prove him, a true and valiant man!
Swift rode Sir Kay unto him, and he turned his bridle round,
And no more his longing glances their joy and their sorrow found,
The white snow and blood-drops crimson, that mystic likeness bare
To the queen of his love and his longing, the Lady of Pelrapär;
He knew all that passed around him—His charger Sir Kay address
To jousting, he spurred him onward, and his spear he laid in rest.
In the joust, that which Kay had aimed at he smote, for his spear did pierce
The Waleis' shield, yet swift payment was his, for in onslaught fierce
The seneschal of King Arthur fell prone on the fallen tree,
Where the geese erewhile had hid them, and hurt full sore was he,
And dead lay his gallant charger—"Twixt a stone and the saddle-bow,
Right arm, and left leg had he broken—so mighty his overthrow
That all that had decked his charger, girths, saddle, bells of gold,
By the force of the fall were shattered, thus the stranger his payment told,
And with one blow, for twain repaid him—the one that erst for his sake,
A maiden had borne and the other, which he from Kay's hand must take.
Thus he who knew naught of falsehood was guided of truth to know
Her message in blood-drops threefold, on the white of the drifted snow.
'Twas tear-drops, not blood, that he saw there, and well might his senses fail,

And the thoughts of his heart wax heavy, as he mused on the wondrous Grail,
 And sorely the semblance grieved him that spake of his wife and queen.
 Yet tho' o'er the twain he sorrowed, the greater woe, I ween,
 Was the woe that Frau Minne wrought him, for there liveth not heart so strong,
 But longing and love united break its power, ere the time be long.
 Count we here those twain as ventures? Nay, 'twere better methinks to hold,
 That they were naught but pain and sorrow, that vanquished the hero bold.
 Now ye unto whom I tell this, I rede ye to mourn Kay's woe,
 For full oft as his manhood bade him, he many a strife did know.
 And in many a land they speak thus, that Kay, Arthur's seneschal,
 Was a firebrand, hell-born, yet I wot well far other the tale I'd tell.
 From reproach would I gladly free him, tho' few but should say me nay,
 Yet a gallant man and a worthy, I swear was this knight, Sir Kay.
 And my mouth to this truth beareth witness, and more would I tell to thee;
 Unto Arthur's Court came strangers in many a company,
 And their manners and ways were diverse, nor all there might honour claim,
 But Kay an he saw false dealing, he counted such ways as shame,
 And his face he turned from the sinner, yet he who dealt courteously,
 And true man with true men would hold him, Kay served him right heartily.
 And one who fall well discernèd the manner of men was Kay,
 Thus he did to his lord good service, for his harsh words drave far away
 The men who would falsely vaunt them good knights and true to be,
 Ill was he to them as a hailstorm, sharp as sting of an angry bee.
 Small wonder that these deny him his honour and knightly fame,
 True servant and wise they found him, and for this cause upon his name
 Their hatred doth still heap slander—Prince Herman, Thuringia's lord,
 Thou with vassals that crowd around thee, and strangers who seek thy board,
 Good service might Kay have done thee, since so free art thou aye of hand,
 That true men and men dishonoured, side by side in thine hall they stand;
 And therefore Knight Walter singeth, 'Now greeting to all I bring,
 Men evil and good!' And I trow well, where a singer such song may sing,
 There the false are too highly honoured—Nay, far other Sir Kay had taught,
 (Yea, and Heinrich of Rispach also)—Now hearken ye in what sort
 On Plimizöl's plain men bare them; from the field Sir Kay was borne
 To the tent of his king, and around him, o'er his ill-fate his friends did mourn;
 And maiden and knight they stood there; to the tent where his comrade lay
 Came Gawain, and he quoth in sadness, 'Alas! for the woeful day
 That so ill a joust was ridden that hath robbed me of a friend!'
 Then out spake Kay in his anger, 'Now make of thy moan an end,
 If comfort thou here wouldst bring me, do not as the women do,
 Since thou art my monarch's nephew! I would do to thee service true,
 As of free heart I ever did it, in the day that God gave me power,
 Nor long for my aid hadst thou prayed me! There cometh, perchance, an hour
 When I, as of old, may serve thee: now cease thou thy moan I pray,
 For tho' mine be the pain, yet my monarch shall ne'er find another Kay,
 And I wot that for mine avenger art thou all too nobly born;
 An yet hadst *thou* lost a finger I had counted myself forsworn
 An I risked not mine head to pay it! Let that be as it may,
 Believe me or not, as shall please thee, yet sooth are the words I say!'
 'No joust shalt thou ride at my urging, for roughly he greets his foe,
 Who holdeth without his station, and rideth nor swift nor slow.
 And I think me, of maidens' tresses, tho' frail be such cord and fair,
 Enough from such strife to bind thee, the chain of a single hair!
 And the man who shall show such meekness, he well doth his *mother* love,
 Since his *sire* would fain in the conflict his knightly mettle prove.

But follow thou aye thy mother, Sir Gawain, list well her rede.
 Turn thou pale at the glancing sword-blade, and shrink from the manly deed!
 And thus on the gallant hero the bitter words he spake
 Fell sharply, he looked not for them, nor on Kay might he vengeance take,
 Full seldom a knight may do so, since shame on his lips setteth seal,
 But they who thus speak discourteous, such shame shall they never feel.
 Then Gawain he quoth in answer, 'Where men knightly sword might bear,
 And have foughten, and I fought with them, then no man beheld me there,
 And saw that my cheek waxed paler at sight of wound or blow.
 I was ever thy friend—'twas needless that thou shouldst reproach me so!'
 Then he strode from the tent, and he bade them bring hither his charger good,
 Nor spur on his heel he buckled, unarmed he his steed bestrode.
 So came he unto the Waleis (whose sense was of love held fast),
 And his shield to all eyes bare witness of three spears thro' its circle passed,
 For three jousts of late had he ridden, and he rode them with heroes twain,
 Of Orilus too was he smitten—Then gently uprode Gawain,
 And he spurred not his steed to gallop, nor conflict nor strife he sought,
 For he rode but in love and in kindness, to seek him who here had fought.
 Fair spake Gawain the stranger, to greeting deaf was he,
 Frau Minne yet held him captive, how other might it be?
 True son of Herzeleide, to this lot was he born,
 To lose himself for love's sake; such passion as had torn
 The hearts of these his parents, afresh in his heart awoke,
 And but little his ear might hearken what the mouth of Gawain spoke.
 Quoth King Lot's son unto the Waleis, 'Sir Knight, here thou doest ill
 In that thou withholdest greeting—tho' patient I wait thy will
 Far otherwise can I bear me! Know thou that to friend and king,
 Yea, to all whom I count my fellows, thy deed doth dishonour bring,
 And our shame ever waxeth greater; yet prayed I for thee this grace,
 The king of free heart forgives thee, if now thou shalt seek his face.
 So hearken, I pray, my counsel, and do thou as I shall say,
 And ride thou with me to King Arthur, nor too long shalt thou find the way.'
 Nor threatening nor prayer might move him, this fair son of Gamuret:
 Then the pride of King Arthur's knighthood his memory backward set,
 And he thought of Frau Minne's dealings, and the time when the knife's sharp blade
 He drave thro' his hand unwitting, thro' the love of a gracious maid.
 And that time when from death's cold clutches, a queen's hand had set him free,
 When of Lâhelein was he vanquished, and captive in joust was he,
 And a queen in the day of his danger must pledge her fair life for his,
 And her name shall of men be praised, Queen Ingus of Bachtarliess.
 Thought Gawain, 'It may be Frau Minne dealeth so with this goodly man,
 As she dealt with me of old time, so claspeth him in the ban
 Of her magic spells fair-woven, that his spirit within the snare
 She holdeth fast entangled'—Then his eyes on the snow-flakes fair
 He cast, and he knew the token, and swift from the spell-bound sight
 With cloth of fair silk and sendal, he covered the blood-drops bright.
 The blood-stained snow was hidden, nor longer its spell was seen,
 And his sight and his sense unclouded she gave him, his wife and queen;
 Yet his heart did she hold in her keeping, and its dwelling was Pelrapär,
 And he cried aloud in his sorrow thro' the silent summer air;
 'Alas! who of thee hath robbed me, who erewhile wast my queen and wife,
 For thy love, thy crown, and thy kingdom my right hand hath won in strife.
 Say, say, am I he who saved thee from Klamidé the warrior king?
 Yea, sorrow and bitter sighing, and grief that the heart doth wring

Are the guerdons I won in thy service, and now from mine eyes be-dazed
 Art thou reft, and thy place I know not, tho' but now on thy face I gazed.
 Then he quoth, 'Now, where shall my spear be, since I wot well I brought it here?'
 Quoth Gawain, 'A joust hast thou ridden, and splintered shall be thy spear.'
 'With whom should I joust?' quoth the Waleis, 'thou bearest nor sword nor shield,
 And little had been mine honour, an thou to my hand didst yield!
 Yet bear I awhile thy mocking, nor will I thy friendship pray,
 Tho' many a joust have I ridden, yet my saddle I kept alway.
 An thou be not for jousting minded, and I find not in thee a foe,
 Yet the world lieth wide before me, and hence on my way I go;
 For labour and strife am I seeking and fain would I win me praise,
 Be anguish or joy my portion; nor unfruitful shall be my days.'
 Quoth Gawain, 'What I spake aforetime I spake of true heart and free,
 Nor my thoughts were the thoughts of evil, for well would I deal with thee;
 And the boon that I crave will I win me, my monarch with many a knight
 Lieth here at hand with his army, and with many a lady bright,
 An it please thee, Sir Knight, to betake thee to our goodly company,
 From all strife shall this right hand guard thee, and gladly I'll ride with thee.'
 'I thank thee, Sir Knight, fair thou speakest, yet say ere with thee I ride,
 Who the monarch may be whom thou servest? and who rideth here at my side?'
 'A man do I hail as master, thro' whose fame much fame I won,
 Nor here shall my mouth keep silence on the things he for me hath done.
 For dear hath he ever held me, and as true knight did me entreat:
 (His sister King Lot hath wedded, and the twain I as parents greet.)
 And the good gifts God gave unto me, to his service I yield them all,
 For my hand and my heart he ruleth, whom men do King Arthur call.
 Nor mine own name need here be hidden, nor a secret shall long remain,
 For the folk and the lands that know me, they call on me as Gawain:
 And fain would I do thee service, alike with my hand and name,
 If thou turnest here at my bidding, nor bringest upon me shame!'
 Then he quoth, 'Is it thou, O Gawain? too little I yet have done
 That thou shouldst as a friend entreat me; yet hast thou this honour won
 That all men thou gently treatest—and thy friendship I here will take,
 Yet not for mine own deserving, but repayment I fain would make.
 Now say where thine army lieth, since so many tents I see
 That stand fair by the brink of the river? If King Arthur in truth shall be
 So near, then must I bemoan me, that in honour I may not dare
 To enter his royal presence, or look on his queen so fair.
 Since 'tis meet that I first avenge me of a foul and discourteous blow,
 For which, since the day I left them, I sorrow and shame must know.
 For a maiden as she beheld me, laughed sweetly, the seneschal
 For my sake smote the maid so sorely, 'twas a wood that upon her fell.'
 'Rough vengeance thou here hast taken! (Gawain to the Waleis spake)
 Since thou in a joust hast felled him, and right arm and left leg he brake.
 Ride here, see his charger lifeless, that lieth the stone below;
 On the snowdrift behold the splinters of the spear that hath dealt the blow!
 'Tis the spear thou but now wast seeking!' Then the truth knew Sir Parzival,
 And straightway he spake unto Gawain, 'Now, if this be the seneschal,
 And the man who so sorely shamed me, if thou swear me that this was he,
 Thou mayst ride where thou wilt, and gladly will I ride in thy company!'
 'Nay, never a lie do I tell thee,' quoth Gawain, 'thou hast overthrown
 Segramor, who ere now in battle was ever as victor known,
 He fell ere yet Kay had met thee: great deeds hast thou done to-day,
 Since o'er two of our bravest heroes the prize thou hast borne away.'
 So rode they, the one with the other, the Waleis and Knight Gawain,

And the folk, both afoot and on horseback, with honour would greet the twain,
 Gawain and his guest the Red Knight, this did they of courtesy,
 And the twain to his fair pavilion they gat them right speedily.
 And the lady, fair Kunnewaaré, whose tent by Gawain's did stand,
 Rejoiced, and she joyful greeted the hero, whose strong right hand
 Had failed not to wreak stern vengeance for the ill that Kay wrought that day;
 Then her brother and fair Jeschuté she led by the hand straightway,
 And Parzival looked upon them as the three to his tent drew near,
 And his face, thro' the rust of his armour, it shone ever fair and clear,
 As roses dew-dipped had flown there: his harness aside he laid,
 And he stood before Kunnewaaré, and thus spake the gentle maid:
 'To God shalt thou first be welcome, as welcome thou art to me,
 Since thy manhood thou well hast proven, and the faith that I had in thee!
 Ere the day that my heart beheld thee, nor laughter nor smiles I knew,
 And Kay, who in that hour smote me, with stern hand my gladness slew.
 But now hast thou well avenged me! With a kiss I thy deed would pay,
 If I of thy kiss were worthy!' 'Nay, so had I thought to-day
 To crave of thy lips my payment,' quoth Parzival, 'if thou still
 Wilt give me such gracious greeting, right gladly I'll do thy will!'
 Then she kissed him, and down they sate them, and the princess a maiden sent
 And bade her to bring rich raiment; so sped she unto the tent;
 And the garments they lay there ready, of rich silk of Nineveh,
 For her prisoner, King Klamidé, had she fashioned them cunningly.
 Then the maiden who bare the garments, full sorely must she bewail
 That the mantle was yet unfinished, since the silken cord did fail.
 Then the lady, Kunnewaaré, from her side drew a silken band
 From the folds of her robe, in the mantle she wove it with skilful hand.
 Then courteous her leave he prayed him, the rust would he wash away,
 And fair shone his face, and youthful, and his lips they were red that day.
 And robed was the gallant hero, and so bright and so fair was he,
 That all men who there beheld him, they sware he for sure must be
 The flower and the crown of manhood, a knight without shame or fear;
 And they looked upon him, and they praised him and his colour waxed bright and clear,
 And right well did his garb become him; an emerald green and rare,
 The gift of fair Kunnewaaré, as clasp at his neck he bare;
 And a girdle beside she gave him, all wrought in a cunning row
 With mystic beasts, bejewelled, that burnt with a fiery glow,
 And its clasp was a red-fire ruby—How think ye the beardless youth
 Was seen when thus richly girded? Fair was he in very sooth,
 For so the story runneth—the folk bare him right goodwill,
 Men and women who looked upon him, they counted him worthy still.
 Forthwith, as the Mass was ended, came Arthur the noble king,
 And the knights of his Table with him, a goodly following.
 No man there whose lips spake falsehood. Yea, all heard the word that day,
 'With Gawain the Red Knight dwelleth!' the king thither took his way.
 Then the knight who so sore was beaten came swiftly, Sir Antanor,
 For, fain to behold the Waleis, his feet sped the king before,
 And he asked, 'Art thou he who avenged me, and the lady of fair Lalande?
 Now vanished shall be Kay's honour, for it falleth unto thine hand,
 And an end hast thou made of his threatening, and the days of his strife are o'er,
 For his arm it is weak, and his vengeance I fear for it never more!'
 And so fair was the knight and radiant, that all men beheld his face
 As an angel from heaven, that wingless, abideth on earth a space.
 And well did King Arthur greet him, and his knights were no whit behind,
 And all they who looked upon him, naught but love in their hearts might find,

And their lips to their heart made answer, and all spake to his praises, 'Yea,'
 And no man gainsaid the other, so lovely his mien that day!
 Then Arthur spake fair unto him, 'Thou hast wrought me both joy and pain,
 Yet ne'er from the hand of a hero such honour I thought to gain
 As the honour that thou hast brought me! yet no service I did to thee,
 An I did, then thy fame had repaid it, tho' no other thy deeds should be
 Than the deed thou hast done in the winning for Jeschuté her husband's grace!
 Nor Kay's guilt had been unavenged, if ere this I had seen thy face
 Myself had, unasked, chastised him.' Then Arthur in this wise spake,
 'Since so far they had come, and their journey had they taken but for his sake,
 They all with one voice did pray him, to swear to them brotherhood,
 And be one of the gallant Table, a comrade both true and good.'
 And their prayer it seemed good unto him, and joyful at heart was he,
 And he sware them the oath that they asked for, and their knight would he gladly be.
 Now hear ye, and speak the verdict, if on this day the Table Round
 Its right, and its due observance had here, as aforetime found;
 Since for many a day King Arthur in this wise had ruled his court,
 No knight should break bread before him, if there came of fair venture naught.
 But enough should have chanced this morning, and to Table they well might go,
 Though from Nantes might they never bear it, yet they here would its semblance show.
 Wide enow was the flowery meadow, nor hindered them tree or tent,
 As they did here their monarch's bidding—for this was his heart's intent,
 Fair honour to give the Red Knight, and his valour, as meet, reward—
 Then a silk in Acraton woven, they laid on the grassy sward,
 'Twas brought from far lands of paynim, and 'twas shapen both wide and round;
 For ever this courteous custom mid these gallant knights was found,
 No high seat had they of honour, but all men were equal there;
 And thus had King Arthur willed it, both the knights and their ladies fair
 At the Table Round were welcome, yea, an they might honour claim,
 Knight, lady, or gentle maiden, at his court all should fare the same!
 And there, with her maiden following, came fair Guinevere the queen,
 And many a noble princess amid her train was seen,
 And none but was fair to look on, and the ring it was spread so wide
 That within, without strife or crowding, each maid sat her knight beside.
 And Arthur, who ne'er knew falsehood, led the Waleis by the hand,
 And Kunnewaaré she walked beside him, the lady of fair Lalande,
 From sorrow the knight had freed her—Then, with kind and friendly eyes,
 Looked Arthur upon the hero, and he spake to him in this wise:
 'My queen will I bid to kiss thee, who art fair both of form and face,
 For ne'er, in this court, of lady I ween wouldst thou crave this grace,
 Since from Pelrapär thou hast ridden, and wert thou on kissing bent
 From lips of all lips the fairest, hast thou there thy full heart's content!
 Yet this one grace will I pray thee, if ever there dawn the day
 That I find 'neath thy roof abiding, this kiss I may then repay!'
 'In sooth, will I do thy bidding,' quoth the Waleis, 'both there and here!'
 Then unto the gallant hero stepped the Lady Guinevere,
 And fair on the lips she kissed him, and she quoth, 'Here I pardon thee
 The ill thou aforetime didst me, and the sorrow thou gavest me.
 Thou didst leave me sorely grieving, when from hence thou didst ride away.
 By thy hand and thy dart my kinsman Prince Ither was slain that day!'
 And all tear-bedewed were the eyelids of the Lady Guinevere,
 For Prince Ither's death wrought sorrow unto many a woman dear.
 Now must King Klamidé seat him, on the bank by Plimizöl,
 And beside him sate Iofreit, who was son unto King Idöl;
 And 'twixt Klamidé and Gawain must the Waleis have his place—

And they know who tell the venture, none sate here of royal grace,
 None who woman's breast had suckled, whose fame stood so high and fair,
 For courage and youthful beauty did the Waleis, as jewels, wear.
 And they owned, who there looked upon him, that many a maiden bright
 Saw herself in a darker mirror than the lips of this fair young knight.
 And on cheek and on chin his colour might well as fetters be
 For those who should need such fetters, whose fancy flitteth free.
 Here might there be naught of changing—(of women my rede I trow
 For some they are ever wavering, and ever new friendships know!)
 But his look ever constant held them, till I wot well that thro' their eyes
 His entry he gained triumphant, and made of their hearts his prize!
 Thus maiden and man beheld him, and his honour all men did praise,
 Till he found here the goal of sighing, and the end of his joyous days.
 For hither came one I must tell of, and faithful was she in truth
 Tho' discourteous her ways, and for sorrow, I ween, had she little ruth!
 And the folk for her message sorrowed—Now hear how the maid must ride,
 Her mule it was tall as a war-horse, and branded on either side;
 And its nostrils were slit as is custom in the far land of Hungary,
 Yet her harness and bridle were costly, with rich work broidered cunningly.
 Soft and slow paced her mule, yet the maiden was not as a maid, I trow.
 What sought she? She came as 'twas fated, and sorrow must Arthur know.
 And of wisdom forsooth this maiden might boast her a wondrous store,
 No tongue but she spake, French, Latin, and Paynim: in all such lore
 As men read in the highest heavens, Dialectics, Geometry,
 In all was she courteous trainèd, and her name it was called Kondrie.
 'The sorceress' did men name her, nor her speech halted on its way,
 Too ready her tongue, since rejoicing she smote into grief that day.
 This maiden, so rich in wisdom, bare little of maiden grace,
 No lover e'er praised her beauty, no tongue spake her fair of face.
 A tempest she, joy destroying, yet of bridal cloth from Ghent
 Did she wear a mantle, bluer than azure the soft tints blent.
 As a cap was it fairly fashioned, such as maidens in France shall wear,
 And beneath it, around her body, a silken robe she bare.
 And a hat of the English peacock, with silk of orient lined,
 And new was the hat, and the fastening, and it hung low the maid behind.
 And like to a bridge her message, that sorrow o'er joy had crossed,
 And shame enough did she bring them, till laughter in tears was lost.
 In a thick plait above her headgear had she flung her tresses back,
 And adown on the mule were they hanging, so long, and so coarse, and black,
 Nor softer to touch than the bristles, which swine on their backs shall show.
 And her nose as a dog's was shapen, and from out her mouth did grow
 Two tusks as had 'seemed a wild boar, a hand's-breadth long were they;
 And above her eyes the eyebrows as thick as plaits they lay.
 And I speak but the truth, as I needs must, tho' my words lack in courtesy
 Since I speak of a maid, yet, for such cause, none other reproacheth me.
 And ears as a bear had Kondrie, and never the eye might trace
 A shy glance of love, or of longing, I ween in that wondrous face.
 And a scourge did she bear, and the handle was a ruby, of silk the cord;
 And the hands of this winsome maiden like a lion's were sharply clawed,
 And the skin as an ape's was dusky, and the nails they were not too light,
 And I ween, for her maiden favours, but seldom would heroes fight!
 So rode she unto the circle, and her coming did sorrow bring,
 And fair joy did she put in peril—Then turned she unto the king,
 (And Kunnewaaré sat beside him, his table-mate was she,
 And fair Guinevere, his consort, a queen bare her company.)

Thus in royal state King Arthur as monarch sat that day—
 To the Breton king rode Kondrie, and in French did she speak alway;
 And tho' I in another language than hers shall the venture tell,
 Yet I rede ye to wit that the telling it pleaseth me none too well!
 'Thou son of high Pendragon, thyself, and thy Breton host,
 By thy deed hast thou shamed—From all lands the noblest that they might boast
 Once sat here a gallant circle, but poisoned is now their fame,
 And thy Table Round dishonoured by traitor, and brought to shame.
 King Arthur, o'er all thy fellows, thy praises of old stood high,
 But it sinketh now, thy glory, and thy fame, that did swiftly fly,
 Henceforward goeth halting; thine honour doth seek the ground
 Since it showeth stain of falsehood—The fame of thy Table Round
 It suffered for the friendship ye with Parzival did swear,
 Tho' I wot well the outward token of a spotless knight he bear.
 "The Red Knight" ye here do call him, the name of one who lay
 Dead before Nantes, yet I tell thee unlike in their life are they!
 For no mouth hath read of a hero whose fame knew nor fault nor flaw,
 As his!' From the king she turned her, and did rein by the Waleis draw,
 And she quoth, 'Now sore shalt thou rue it, since I, for thy sake deny
 My greeting unto King Arthur, and the knights of his company.
 May thy fair face be dishonoured, and thy manhood I look on here.
 Of forgiveness and joy were I merchant, in sooth shouldst thou buy them dear!
 And I deem thou art but a monster, and myself shall far fairer be!
 Speak, Sir Parzival, as I bid thee, and this riddle read thou to me,
 When thou sawest the fisher sit there, joyless, of comfort reft,
 Why didst thou not loose his sighing? Why was he in bondage left?'
 'For he showed thee of his sorrow—Oh! thou false and faithless guest,
 For hadst thou had pity on him, his anguish had gotten rest.
 I would that thy mouth might perish, yea, the tongue thy mouth within,
 For e'en as the heart the tongue is, in thine *heart* is the root of sin.
 To Hell shalt thou be predestined, by the Ruler of Heaven high,
 And this be on earth thy portion, that true men thy face shall fly.
 And ban hast thou won for blessing, and for bliss shalt thou find but bale,
 For too late dost thou strive for honour, and thy striving shall naught avail.
 And so feeble shall wax thy manhood, and thy fame it shall be so weak,
 That never shall soul's physician the promise of healing speak.
 An one to the oath should drive me, on thine head were I fain to swear,
 That never a darker treason was wrought by a man so fair.
 Thou hook in fair feathers hidden, bright serpent with poisoned fang,
 Who ne'er of the sword was worthy, which thine host at thy side did hang!
 The goal of thy sins, this thy silence, of Hell's horde art thou now the sport,
 And dishonour upon thy body, Sir Parzival, hast thou wrought.
 Saw'st thou not how they bare before thee the Grail, and the bleeding spear,
 And sharp silver? Thy joy's destruction, and thy shelter from grief were here!'
 'Yea, hadst thou but asked at Monsalväsch; afar, in a heathen land,
 Rich o'er all earthly riches, doth the town of Tabronit stand;
 Yet the riches thy speech had won thee had been greater far, I ween—
 And with gallant strife of knighthood the hand of that country's queen
 Feirefis Angevin hath won him: no fear doth his manhood stain;
 One father, I ween, hath borne ye, yet unlike shall ye be, ye twain.
 And thy brother is strange to look on, for both white and black his face,
 And at Zassamank he reigneth o'er the folk of his mother's race.'
 'And my thoughts to thy sire are turning; his country was fair Anjou,
 And he left thee far other heirdom (for his heart never falsehood knew),
 Than the heritage thou hast won thee, and the crown of an evil fame!

And could I but think thy mother had wrought here a deed of shame
 I had said that *his* child thou wert not! Yet her faith it but wrought her woe,
 And of her naught but good be spoken! And thy father, as all men know,
 In his manhood was true and steadfast, and in many a distant land
 He won for him meed of honour, and his praise o'er all men did stand.
 For great heart and little falsehood as a roof did defend his breast,
 A dam 'gainst the flood of evil, and a home for his love to rest.
 And in manly strength and courage was his honour for aye held fast,
 But *thy* truth it is turned to falsehood, and thine honour to earth is cast!
 Alas! for the day I heard it, alas! for the mournful tale,
 That the child of fair Herzeleide in knighthood and faith should fail.
 She herself was the prey of sorrow, and her hands did she wring amain,
 While the teardrops they chased each other down her cheeks like a shower of rain.
 And her eyes they gave faithful witness to the grief that her bosom filled,
 For of true heart she spake, the maiden, nor e'en then was the sorrow stilled.
 Then unto the king she turned her, and she spake 'Is there here a knight
 Who yearneth for love's rewarding, and for honour and fame would fight?
 For I know of four queens, and maidens four hundred, and all are fair,
 In Château Merveil is their dwelling; and like to the empty air
 Shall be all knightly ventures to the venture that Burg within,
 Yet he who shall face its peril, from true love shall his guerdon win.
 And tho' far be that Burg and distant, and weary and rough the way,
 Its walls must I seek if haply I reach them ere close of day.'
 And sad was the maid, not joyful, nor courteous she bade farewell,
 But weeping she gazed around her, and she cried as the teardrops fell,
 'Ah! woe unto thee, Monsalväsich, thou dwelling and goal of grief,
 Since no man hath pity on thee, or bringeth thy woe relief.'
 Thus had the sorceress Kondrie, that maiden fierce and proud,
 Wrought evil upon the Waleis, and his fame to the earth had bowed.
 Naught they helped him, his bold heart's counsel, his manhood and knightly fame,
 And high o'er all other virtues, the virtue of knightly shame.
 (For falsehood he ne'er had hearkened,) and true shame doth rewarding bring,
 And it crowneth the soul with honour as the circlet doth crown a king.
 And he who true shame doth cherish his work shall for ever stand—
 Then she lifted her voice o'er the maidens, the maiden of fair Lalande,
 And she wept for the words of Kondrie, and the sorrow of Parzival,
 For the fairest of men did she deem him; and swiftly the teardrops fell
 From the eyes of many a woman, for the sake of that hero bold,
 And they sorrowed at heart, and their weeping must many a knight behold!
 Now sorrow had Kondrie brought them; and e'en as her way she went
 Another must ride towards them on a warlike errand bent;
 A knight of a haughty bearing, and his harness was fair to see,
 From his foot to the goodly helmet, and royal its cost must be,
 And richly plumed was the helmet; and, e'en as the man, the steed
 Was clad in such glittering armour as serveth for knightly need.
 And he found them, both man and maiden, heavy and sad at heart,
 As he rode nigh unto the circle; hear ye how he bare his part—
 Tho' his mien it was high and haughty, yet his heart it was full of woe,
 Of the twain shall ye learn the reason; thro' his manhood he pride must know,
 Yet grief to his heart taught mourning—Thus rode he unto the ring,
 Were it well he should come within it? Then squires to his aid did spring,
 And the gallant knight they greeted, yet were he and his shield unknown,
 Nor he doffed from his head the helmet, and sorrow was his alone;
 And his hand bare a sword unsheathèd, and he asked for those heroes twain,
 'Where are they whom I fain would speak with, King Arthur and Knight Gawain?'

Then straight thro' the ring he passed him, and a costly coat he bare,
 And 'twas wrought of silk all shining, in Orient woven fair;
 And before the host he halted as he sate there within the ring,
 And he spake aloud, 'God's favour be on thee, thou gracious king,
 And upon these knights and ladies—To all whom mine eyes here see,
 I offer, in greeting, service, yet be *one* from my greeting free;
 For ne'er will I do him service, nay, rather I choose his hate,
 If ill-will he beareth to me, mine ill-will with his may mate!'

'And 'twere well that I name him to ye. Alas! alas! woe is me!
 My heart he so sore hath wounded, mine anguish o'er-great shall be!
 And here doth he sit, Sir Gawain, whom all men were wont to praise,
 High standeth his fame, yet dishonour it ruleth, methinks, his ways;
 Since avarice to this betrayed him, in greeting my lord he slew,
 The kiss once by Judas given, it taught him such guile anew.
 Many thousand hearts hath he wounded—'Twas murder base, abhorred,
 And he, upon whom he wrought it, erewhile was my dearest lord.
 An Sir Gawain would here deny it, true answer our strife shall yield,
 Forty days from to-day shall he meet me, and face me on battlefield,
 Before Askalon's king and ruler, in the city of Schamfanzon;
 Thus I bid him in honour face me, and for conflict his armour don.'

'And this grace shall he not refuse me, but thither his shield shall bear;
 And yet further shall he bethink him, by the helmet he weareth fair,
 And the life that a knight beseemeth, who two treasures in pledge doth hold,
 True shame, and a faith unwavering, and their fame shall be new, as old.
 But from shame may Gawain ne'er free him, if a knight of the Table Round,
 Whose heroes stand here before me, he thinketh he may be found.
 For its honour and fame are vanished, if false knight sit its board beside—
 Methinks ye have heard mine errand, and ye know I came not to chide,
 For here would I not blame, but battle, and death shall my guerdon be,
 An it be not a life of honour, that Good Fortune shall hold for me!'

Then sad was the king and silent, yet answer at last he gave,
 'Know, Sir Knight, that Gawain is my nephew, and myself would the conflict brave
 Ere his bones should lie dishonoured—If Good Fortune by Gawain stand
 In strife shalt thou well acknowledge, 'neath the might of his strong right hand
 That his body in faith he keepeth, and falsehood afar doth hold.
 If another hath done thee evil methinks art thou over-bold,
 His shame dost thou speak too loudly, who never hath done thee ill—
 If he winneth, perchance, thine homage, and thou ownest him guiltless still,
 Yet hast thou in short space spoken such words of a blameless knight
 As have shamèd for aye thine honour, if this folk read the thing aright!'

Then upsprang the proud Knight Beaucorps, brother to Gawain he,
 And he spake in his wrath, 'Wouldst thou fight him? Then myself his pledge will be,
 For thou speakest false of Gawain; and know that thy words of shame
 Have kindled anew within me fierce wrath's devouring flame.
 An thou speakest not Gawain guiltless of all dishonour, I
 Stand here to fight his battle, and to be his surety.
 Think not by thy words of scorning to lower his lofty fame,
 Unstained is Gawain's honour, and thy words are but words of shame!'

Then he turned him to his brother, and he spake of true heart and free,
 'Bethink thee now, my brother, of all thou hast done for me,
 Thou hast helped me unto the winning of fame, for thy toil's reward
 Bid me here to be hostage for thee, and bid me thine honour guard.
 If Good Fortune be here my portion, and I win here my meed of fame,
 Then *thine* be the crown of honour, and thy foeman hath naught but shame.'
 By his knighthood and love as a brother he besought him right earnestly;

Quoth Gawain, 'Now in sooth, my brother, too wise shall I surely be
 To hearken to thee, and to grant thee what thou askest of right good-will;
 What meaneth this strife, I wot not, and of fighting have had my fill,
 Of good-will would I ne'er deny thee what boon thou from me shouldst crave,
 Yet shame must I bear for ever if this conflict I fail to brave!'
 Yet Beaucorps he prayed him straitly—then out spake the stranger knight,
 'A man whom I ne'er have heard of now lusteth with me to fight!
 I spake not of *him*, and no evil, methinks, hath he done to me.
 Strong, gallant, and fair to look on, and faithful and rich is he,
 And well might he be my hostage, yet against *him* no wrath I bear—
 My lord and my kinsman was he for whose death I this strife declare,
 And brothers twain were our fathers, as comrades and kinsmen true;
 And were he a crownèd monarch against whom my sword I drew,
 By my birth might I give him battle, and vengeance of right demand,
 Of a royal race, and a princely, was I born in a distant land.
 And Askalon is my country, I am Landgrave of Schamfanzon,
 Kingrimursel do they call me; if Gawain's fame be not outrun
 No otherwise may he free him, but conflict with me must dare.
 Yet safe-conduct throughout my kingdom, from all save my hand, I swear,
 In peace may he ride, and safety, to the field where I vengeance claim;
 God keep in His grace those I leave here, save one, and ye know *his* name!'
 So passed he, the gallant hero, from the plain of Plimizöl,
 And e'en as his name was namèd, all men knew Kingrimursel,
 For the fame of this knight so valiant was known thro' the far lands wide,
 And it seemèd them well that to Gawain might ill thro' this strife betide
 When they thought of the strength and the manhood of this knight who rode swift away.
 And many must sorely vex them that no honour he won that day;
 Yet full often a message cometh, I myself shall such venture know,
 Of such wise, that the guest who bears it, of his host must ungreeted go!
 From Kondrie they heard the tidings of Parzival's name and kin,
 How a queen, she had been his mother, and his sire was an Angevin.
 And they spake—"Twas at fair Kanvoleis, and the story we know full well,
 He served her with deeds of knighthood, and many a joust befell,
 And there by his dauntless manhood he won him that lady bright;
 And the noble Queen Anflisé, she taught him, that gallant knight,
 Such courtesy as befitted a hero of lineage high;
 And no Breton but shall rejoice him, that his son now draweth nigh,
 For of him, e'en as of his father, may this tale of a truth be told
 That honour is his yoke-fellow, as she was of his sire of old.'
 Thus joy alike and sorrow came to Arthur's host that day,
 And mingled, the life of the heroes, since the twain they must have their way.
 Upstood they all as one man, and all with one voice they wept,
 And the bravest knights among them within the circle stept,
 And they looked on Gawain and the Waleis where each by the other stood,
 And they wove them fair words of comfort to pleasure the heroes good.
 But Klamidé the king bethought him that the loss which should be his share
 Was greater than that of another, and too sharp was his pain to bear,
 And to Parzival he quoth thus, 'If the Grail thee for lord must own,
 Yet still would I mourn my sorrow, and of true heart my woe make known.
 For the kingdom of Tribalibot, and Caucasus' golden strand,
 Whatsoe'er shall be writ of riches in Christian or paynim land,
 Yea, even the Grail and its glory, they had failèd the hurt to cure
 Which at Pelrapär was my portion, or the grief that I here endure!
 Ah me! Of all men most wretched am I since thy valiant hand
 Of joy and of blessing robbed me!—See the princess of fair Lalande,

Know thou that this noble lady she keepeth such faith with thee,
 That no service else she craveth, and none other knight will she;
 Yet well might she crown his service who served her for love alone!
 And that I am so long her captive, methinks may she well bemoan.
 If my joy thou to life wouldst quicken, then give me thine aid, I pray,
 And teach her herself to honour in such wise that her love repay
 In a measure the ill thou didst me, and that which thro' thee I lost,
 When the goal of my joy fled from me and my pathway by thee was crossed,
 But for thee, I, methinks, had reached it, and if thou art foeman true
 Thou wilt help me with this fair maiden, and my gladness shall wax anew!
 'Right gladly will I,' quoth the Waleis, 'if so be she will grant my prayer,
 For fain would I bring thee comfort, since *mine* is that maiden fair
 For whose sake thou sore didst sorrow, my wife and my queen is she,
 Kondwiramur, the fairest of all women on earth that be!
 Then the heathen Queen of Ianfus, King Arthur, and Guinevere,
 Kunnewaaré of Lalande, and Jeschuté of Karnant, who these words must hear,
 Came near with sweet words of comfort—what would ye they should do more?
 Kunnewaaré they gave to Klamidé, who yearned for her love so sore,
 And he gave her, as her rewarding, himself, his body fair,
 And a queenly crown and golden henceforth on her head she bare!
 Quoth the heathen unto the Waleis, 'Kondrie a man hath named,
 Whom thou as in truth thy brother, rejoicing, might well have claimed;
 For far and wide he ruleth in the power of a double crown,
 And alike by land and water men in fear to his hand bow down.
 And Assagog is one kingdom, Zassamank shall the other be,
 Two mighty lands and powerful from fear and from weakness free.
 And naught shall be like his riches save those the Baruch doth own,
 Or those of far Tribalibot, he is worshipped as God alone!
 A marvel his skin to look on, and like unto none his face,
 For 'tis black, and 'tis white, as his parents, who sprang of a diverse race.
 Thro' one of his lands I journeyed as hither I took my way,
 And full fain had he been my wanderings in a far-off land to stay.
 Yet but little his will prevailed, tho' I am his near of kin,
 The cousin unto his mother, and *he* is a mighty king!
 Yet hear thou more of his prowess; his saddle no man may keep
 Who rideth a joust against him, and fame doth he richly reap.
 And no gentler knight or truer e'er lay on a mother's breast,
 And falsehood it fleeth from him, and truth in his heart doth rest.
 Yea, true and fair in his dealings is Feirefis Angevin,
 And women he serveth duly, tho' he pain thro' his service win!
 'Tho' all men to me were strangers, yet hither I came to know
 What ventures of gallant knighthood a Christian land might show;
 And of all Heaven's gifts the highest, I ween, shall thy portion be,
 And Christendom winneth honour thro' the praise it doth give to thee.
 And thine is a noble bearing, and fair is thy form and face,
 And in thee beauty mates with manhood, and strength doth thy youth embrace!
 (Both rich and wise was the heathen, and of wisdom she token gave,
 In the French tongue her speech was holden.) Then out spake the hero brave,
 And he quoth, 'God reward thee, Lady, who thinkest to comfort me,
 Yet sorrow it fast doth bind me, and the cause would I tell to thee,
 For the shame that has here befallen think not I shall lightly bear,
 And here many sin against me, who give to my plaint no ear,
 The while I must list their mocking!—No joy shall my portion be
 Or long or short be my wanderings, till the Grail once again I see!
 For my soul's unrest constrains me, and it driveth me on my way,

Nor so long as my life endureth shall my feet from their wanderings stay!'
 'If a courteous and knightly bearing but bringeth rewarding still
 In shame, and in this world's mocking, then methinks I was counselled ill!
 For 'twas Gurnemanz who bade me of questions rash beware,
 And from words and ways unfitting a courteous knight forbear.
 Here standeth full many a hero, I pray ye give counsel true,
 By your courtesy and knighthood, that your grace I may win anew.
 Here hath judgment been passed upon me with bitter words and strong—
 Who withholdeth from me his favour, I deem not he doth me wrong;
 If perchance, in the days hereafter, fame and honour my lot shall be
 Then according to those my dealings, I pray ye to deal with me;
 But now must I haste far from ye—An oath have ye sworn me here
 While I stood in the strength of mine honour; of that oath do I hold ye clear
 Till the day I have won me payment for my fresh joy waxed wan and pale;
 And my heart shall be home of sorrow, nor tears to mine eyes shall fail,
 For the day that at far Monsalväsch my labour I left undone,
 And myself from all joy I severed, and woe for my guerdon won.
 Ah God! they were fair, those maidens! and ne'er was there wonder tale
 That men told, but as naught its marvels to those of the wondrous Grail!
 Yet torment so sore, and sighing, are the lot of Its king, alas!
 Small good hath my coming done thee, thou hapless Anfortas!'
 Nor longer the knight might linger, but part they must alway,
 So turned he unto King Arthur, and leave he fain would pray
 Of him, his knights, and ladies, with their favour would he depart,
 And none, I ween, but sorrowed that he rode hence sad at heart.
 Hand in hand King Arthur sware him, if henceforth his land should bear
 Such woe as Klamidé brought him, then the shame he with him would share,
 And he spake that full sore it grieved him that crowns and kingdoms twain,
 With the riches that were their portion, Lähelein from the knight had ta'en.
 And service both true and faithful many sware unto him that day,
 Ere yet from the court of King Arthur, sorrow-driven, he passed away.
 Then the fair maid Kunnewaaré, she took the hero bold,
 And hence by the hand she led him, and in this wise the tale is told,
 Sir Gawain he turned and kissed him, and he spake out in manly wise
 To the hero strong and gallant: 'Now thou ridest in warlike guise,
 And thy feet shall be swift to battle—God guide thee upon thy way,
 And give me such strength to serve thee as my heart shall be fain alway.'
 But Parzival cried, 'Woe is me! Who is He, this mighty God?
 Had He power, then methinks our portion had ne'er been this shame abhorred!
 Small power shall be His! I served Him from the day I first knew His grace,
 Henceforth I renounce His service; doth He hate me, His hate I'll face!
 And, friend, in thine hour of peril, as thy shield may a *wife's* love stand,
 Dost thou know her for pure and holy, then the thought of her guide thine hand,
 And her love from all evil guard thee,—as I wish, may it be to thee,
 For little I wot of the future, if thy face I again may see!'
 And their parting it brought them sorrow, for comrades in ill were they.
 With the maiden Kunnewaaré, to her tent must he take his way.
 And she bade them bring his harness; with her hands so soft and white,
 She bound the armour on him who had served her as faithful knight.
 And she spake, 'Tis my right to do this, since it is thro' thy deed alone
 That Brandigan's gallant monarch now claimeth me as his own.
 For otherwise thy valour but bringeth me grief and pain,
 Art thou not against sorrow armèd, then thy loss shall outweigh my gain!'
 For battle decked was his charger, and his sorrow must wake to life,
 And fair was the knight to look on; and the harness he bare for strife

Knew never a flaw, but was costly, and as sunshine 'twas white and fair,
And radiant with gold and jewels the corslet and coat he ware,
But the helmet alone was lacking—ere he bound it upon his head,
In the self-same hour he kissed her, Kunnewaaré, the gracious maid.
And this of the twain was told me, that the parting was sore to see
'Twixt those two who loved each other in all honour and loyalty.
So hence let him ride, our hero, and what ventures a man may tell
He shall measure them not with the ventures that to Gamuret's son befell.
Yet hear ye awhile of his doings, where he journeyed and whence would ride—
He who loveth not deeds of knighthood, if counsel he take of pride
For awhile will forget his doings—On thee, Kondwiramur,
On thy fair face and lovely body, thy lover thought evermore.
What ventures he dared in thy service as knightly the Grail he sought!
Nor tarried he in the seeking but onward his way he fought,
The child of fair Herzeleide, and knew not that he was heir
To the glories that he rode seeking, to the Grail and Its palace fair!
Then forth went full many a vassal on a toilsome and weary way,
To gaze on the wondrous castle where in magic fetters lay
Four hundred gracious maidens, and four queens, right fair to see.
Château Merveil was the castle; and no hate shall they earn from me,
I grudge them naught they may win there! No woman rewardeth me,
For she to whom I do service, from payment hath set me free!
Then out spake the Greek, Sir Kliias, 'Yea, there was I overthrown!'
(And thus in the ears of all men did he frankly the truth make known)
'For the Turkowit he thrust me from my charger unto my shame;
And four queens who there lie captive the knight unto me did name;
And old are the twain, and the others as yet they shall children be,
And the first maid is called Itonjè, and the second shall be Kondrie,
And the third she is named Arnivè, and Sangivè the fourth is hight!'
Then fain to behold the wonders of that castle was many a knight,
Yet their journey brought little profit, for sorrow o'ertook them there.
Yet I mourn not o'ermuch for their sorrow; for he who would labour bear,
And strife, for the sake of a woman, for guerdon shall gladness know,
Tho' grief shall be mixed with his gladness, and his joy shall be crossed with woe.
And I know not the which shall be stronger, or if sorrow shall joy outweigh,
But so runneth the world for ever, where Frau Minne she holdeth sway!
Now Gawain he must make him ready, and he girded his armour on,
For the strife that afar should wait him, in the kingdom of Askalon.
And sad was many a Breton, and ladies and maidens fair
Of a true heart did they bemoan them that Gawain must to conflict fare.
And orphaned and reft of glory henceforth was the Table Round.
Then Sir Gawain he well bethought him, since victor he would be found,
And he bade the merchants bring him good shields both hard and light,
And little he recked their colour so they served his need in fight.
On laden mules they brought them, and methinks that they sold them dear;
And three did he take as his portion—and the hero he chose him here
Seven chargers well fit for battle, and he chose him as friends so good
Twelve spears of sharp steel of Angram, and the hilts were of hollow wood.
They were reeds grown in heathen marshlands, Oraste Gentesein their name.
Then Gawain he prayed leave, and rode forth, dauntless, to seek him fame,
And with royal hand, for his journey, King Arthur he gave the knight
Red gold, and rich store of silver, and jewels gleaming bright,
And heavy the weight of his treasure—Then the hero rode swift away,
And I ween 'twas towards sore peril that his pathway must lead that day.
Then she sailed to her distant kingdom, the young Queen Ekuba,

I speak of the heathen princess; and they scattered to lands afar
 The folk who awhile abode there, on the fair plain of Plimizöl;
 And King Arthur and all his courtiers they gat them to Karidöl.
 Yet first they prayed leave, Klamidé and Kunnewaaré of fair Lalande,
 And Duke Orilus and his lady, Jeschuté of Karnant.
 Yet till the third day with Klamidé in the plain did the twain abide,
 And the marriage-feast was holden ere yet from the place they ride.
 Yet small was the pomp; in his kingdom, I ween, should it greater be.
 And free was his hand and knightly, and he dealt right courteously,
 For many a knight at his bidding henceforth must his man remain,
 And many a wandering minstrel did he gather within his train,
 And he led them into his kingdom, and in honour, rich gifts, and land
 He gave unto them, nor churlish would any refuse his hand.
 Now Duke Orilus and Jeschuté, to Brandigan the twain would fare
 For the love that unto Klamidé and Kunnewaaré they bare.
 For they thought them that fitting honour to their sister they scarce had done
 Till as queen they had seen her crownèd, and set on the royal throne.
 Now I know well if wise the woman, and true of heart she be,
 Who seeth this story written, of a sooth will she own to me
 That better I speak of women than I spake of *one* erewhile;
 For true was fair Belakané, and free from all thought of guile,
 For dead was her love, yet lifeless he still o'er her heart did reign.
 And a dream filled fair Herzeleide with torment of fear and pain.
 And Queen Guinevere bewailed her full sorely for Ither's death,
 (And little I grudge her mourning, for no truer knight e'er drew breath).
 And I wot when King Lac's fair daughter rode forth such a shameful ride
 Then sorely I mourned the sorrow that, guiltless, she must abide.
 Sore smitten was Kunnewaaré, and torn was her golden hair;
 Now the twain they are well avengèd, and glory for shame they bear!
 And he who doth tell this story, he weaveth his ventures fair,
 And he knoweth right well to rhyme them, in lines that break and pair.
 And fain were I more to tell ye, an she give to my words good heed
 Who treadeth with feet far smaller than the feet that shall spur my steed!

BOOK VII OBILOT

Awhile shall this venture follow the knight, who to fly was fain
 From shame, nor with guile had dealings, that hero bold, Gawain.
 For many a one hath held him for as brave, yea, for braver knight
 Than Parzival, who the hero of this wonder-tale is hight.
 Yet he who his friend would ever with his words to the heavens upraise
 Is slow to speak well of another, or to yield him his meed of praise;
 But him shall the people follow whose praises with truth are wrought,
 Else whatever he speak, or hath spoken, shall ne'er under roof be brought.
 Who shall shelter the word of wisdom if wise men their aid withhold?
 But a song that is woven of falsehood is best left in the outer cold,
 Homeless, upon the snowdrift, that the mouth may wax chill and sore
 That hath spread for truth the story—such rewarding hath God in store
 As all true folk must wish him whose guerdon in toil is told—
 Who is swift to such deeds, I wot me, but blame for reward shall hold,
 And if good men and true shall praise him, then folly doth rule their mind;
 He will flee such who true shame knoweth, and in knighthood his rule would find.
 And true of heart was Sir Gawain, for courage as sentinel
 Had guarded his fame, nor shadow of cowardice across it fell.
 But his heart in the field of battle was strong as a mighty tower,
 Steadfast in sharpest conflict, yet foremost in danger's hour.

And friend and foe bare witness to the fame of his battle-cry;
Fain was Kingrimursel to rob him of his glory thus waxen high—
Now far from the court of King Arthur for many a weary day,
I know not their tale to tell ye, did the valiant Gawain stray;
So rode he, the gallant hero, from out of a woodland shade,
And his folk they were close behind him as he wended adown the glade,
And there on a hill before him he was 'ware of a goodly sight
That would teach him fear, yet fresh courage it brought to the gallant knight.
For the hero he saw full clearly how a host on their way would fare
With pomp of warlike pageant, and banners borne high in air.
Then he thought, 'I too far have journeyed this host in the wood to wait'—
And he bade them prepare the charger that was Orilus' gift of late,
And red were its ears, and Gringuljet, I think me, they called its name,
Without a prayer he won it—The steed from Monsalväsche came,
Lähelein, in a joust he took it, when lifeless its rider fell
By the Lake of Brimbane—Hereafter Trevrezent would the story tell.
Thought Gawain, 'He who cowardly flieth ere the foe on his track shall be
Flieth all too soon for his honour—this host would I nearer see
Whatever may then befall me; they have seen me ere this I trow,
And, for aught that may chance unto me, wit shall counsel me well enow.'
Then down he sprang from his charger as one who his goal hath found.
Countless I ween the army that in troops was toward him bound,
And he saw many robes fair fashioned, and shields with their blazon bright,
But he knew them not, nor the banners that danced on the breezes light.
'Strange shall I be to this army,' quoth Gawain, 'strange are they to me,
If they count this to me for evil then a joust shall they surely see,
And a spear will I break with these heroes ere yet on my way I ride!'
Gringuljet too was ready when his master would strife abide,
In many an hour of peril he the hero to joust had borne,
As Gawain had well bethought him when the steed he would ride that morn.
There Gawain saw many a helmet, costly and decked full fair,
And new spears white, unsplintered, in sheaves to their goal they bare;
To the pages hands were given those blazoned with colours clear,
And the badge might ye read on the pennons that floated from every spear.
And the son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, he saw there a crowded throng,
There were mules with harness laden; heavy wagons with horses strong,
And they hasted them, fain for shelter; and behind them a wondrous store
Of goods, borne by travelling merchants as was ever the way of yore.
And women were there in plenty, and of knightly girdle bright
The twelfth might some wear, the payment and pledge of love holden light.
Not *queens* were they hight, I think me, *Vivandières* was their name—
And young and old behind them a rabble onward came,
And they ran till their limbs were weary; and a rope had fit guerdon been
For many who swelled this army, and dishonoured true folk I ween!
So they rode, and they ran, that army, and Gawain stood beside the way,
So it chanced they who saw the hero deemed him part of their host that day.
And never this side of the water, or in lands that beyond it lie,
So gallant a host had journeyed, great their strength and their courage high.
And close on their track there followed, spurring his steed amain,
A squire of noble bearing, with a led horse beside his rein;
And a fair new shield he carried, and ever his spurs he plied,
Nor thought to spare his charger, but swift to the strife would ride,
And his raiment was fairly fashioned—Then Gawain his pathway crossed,
And, greeting, he asked him tidings, who was lord of this goodly host?

Quoth the squire, 'Sir Knight thou mockest, were I lacking in courtesy,
 And have chastisement earned, then I pray thee that my penance shall other be
 That shall wound not so sore mine honour—For God's sake lay thine hate aside,
 Methinks thou right well shalt know them, these knights that before us ride,
 Why askest thou me? Of a surety to each other shall ye be known
 As well, nay, a thousand times better, than I unto thee had shown!'
 Then many an oath he sware him, he knew not the race or name
 Of the folk who went there before him, 'My journey hath won but shame,
 Since in truth must I make confession that never before to-day
 Mine eyes have beheld these heroes, tho' mine aid men right oft would pray!
 Then the squire he quoth unto Gawain, 'Sir Knight, *mine* the wrong hath been,
 Thy question I should have answered, here my wisdom hath failed I ween!
 Now pass judgment on me, I pray thee, of thy friendly heart and true,
 Hereafter I'll gladly tell thee, first must I my folly rue.'
 'Then, lad, by thy words of repentance, sure token of courtesy,
 The name of this gallant army I prithee to tell to me!'
 'Sir Knight, he who rides before us, and no man his way doth bar,
 Is King Poidikonjonz; and beside him Duke Astor he rides to war,
 Of Lanveronz is he ruler—and there rideth beside the twain
 One whose roughness and ways discourteous Love's payment have sought in vain.
 He beareth the brand unknowingly, Meljakanz that prince is hight,
 He wooeth nor wife nor maiden, but their love will he take with might,
 And, methinks, men for that should slay him—Poidikonjonz' son is he,
 And here will he fight with his army, and he fighteth right valiantly,
 And dauntless his heart; but such manhood it profiteth naught, I trow—
 An ye threaten, perchance, her sucklings, she fighteth, the mother sow!
 And never a voice shall praise him whose strength lacketh knighthood fair,
 And methinks to the truth of my speaking many men will their witness bear.'
 'Now hearken to greater marvels, and mark thou the words I say,
 One with a mighty army doth follow upon our way
 Whom folly doth drive to battle—The young King Meljanz of Lys,
 Scorned love wrought in him fierce anger, and pride vexed him needlessly,
 And courteous he spake to Sir Gawain. 'What I saw, I Sir Knight will say:
 The sire of the young King Meljanz, as he on his death-bed lay,
 He bade them draw near unto him, the princes from out his land,
 For his gallant life lay forfeit, a pledge in stern Death's cold hand,
 And to Death he needs must yield him—In grief o'er his coming end
 To the faith of the princes round him his son would the king commend,
 And he chose out one from among them, the chief of his vassals true,
 And his faith was proved and steadfast, and from false ways afar he flew.
 And he gave the lad to his keeping, and he quoth, 'Now, with hand and heart,
 True service henceforward show him, bid him aye act a kingly part
 To vassal alike and stranger; bid him list to the poor man's prayer,
 And freely give of his substance.' Thus he left him unto his care.'
 'And Prince Lippaut did as his monarch, dying, of him did pray,
 Nor failed in aught, but true service he did to his lord alway.
 And he took the lad to his castle, and the prince had two children fair,
 He loved them well, and I think me, e'en to-day they his love shall share.
 One maiden in naught was lacking, save in age, that a knight might crave
 Her love for his love's rewarding; Obie was the name they gave
 To this maid; Obilot, her sister; and the elder maid, I ween,
 Hath wrought ill, for she, and none other, the cause of this strife hath been.'
 'It so fell that one day the young king for his service reward would pray,
 'Twas an ill thought, she quoth, and she asked him why his wits he had cast away?
 And she spake unto him, 'I think me, e'en if thou so old shouldst be,

That 'neath shield thou the hours hadst counted that in worthy strife might flee;
 With helmet on head hadst mingled in knightly venture bold,
 Till the tale of thy days, if reckoned, full five years more had told;
 If there thou hadst won thee honour, and hither hadst come again,
 And bowed thyself to my bidding, if a *yea* I to speak were fain
 To that which thou now desirest, all too soon should I grant thy prayer—
 Thou art dear, I will ne'er deny it, as Galoes to Annora fair;
 For death did she seek, and I think me that her seeking was not in vain,
 When she lost him, her well beloved, and her knight in a joust was slain.
 'Now sore doth it grieve me, Lady, that love worketh so in thee,
 That thine anger with words of scorning thus venteth itself on me.
 For true service,' quoth he, 'winneth favour, an love thus be well approved;
 O'er-weening thy pride thus to taunt me that madness my speech had moved!
 Small wisdom in this thou showest, 'twere better thou hadst bethought,
 How thy father is but my vassal, and save of my grace hath naught!
 'For that which he holds can he serve thee,' she spake, 'higher is my aim,
 For fief will I hold of no man, none shall me as vassal claim!
 And so high do I prize my freedom that no crown it shall be too high,
 That an earthly head e'er wareth!' Then he spake out wrathfully,
 'Methinks thou hast been well tutored, that thy pride shall have waxed so great,
 An thy father such counsel gave thee, then penance on wrong shall wait—
 'Tis meet that for this I arm me, some wounded shall be, some slain,
 An they call it or war, or Tourney, many spears shall they break in twain!
 'Thus in anger he left the maiden, and all did his wrath bemoan,
 Yea, full sore it grieved the lady—Her father must well atone,
 Tho' he sware as his lord reproached him, guiltless of wrong was he,
 (Or straight were his ways or crooked, his peers should his judges be,
 All the princes in court assembled)—that he to this strait was brought
 Thro' no sin of his own—And eager the prince from his lord besought
 His favour and love as of old time, but in vain he for peace might pray,
 For anger it ruled the monarch, and his gladness was reft away.
 'Tho' hasty the prince they counselled a prisoner to make his lord,
 His host had he been, and such treason of a true knight were aye abhorred.
 Farewell, the king ne'er bade him, but he rode forth in wrath and pride,
 And his pages, the sons of princes, aloud in their sorrow cried.
 Long time with the king they dwelt there, and goodwill they to Lippaut bare,
 For in truth did he aye entreat them, nor failed them in knighthood fair.
 'Tis my master alone who is wrathful, tho' he, too, Lippaut's care might claim,
 A Frenchman, the lord of Beauvais, Lisavander they call his name.
 And the one alike and the other, ere a knight's shield they thought to bear,
 Must renounce the prince's service, and war against Lippaut swear;
 And some shall be prince's children, and some not so highly born,
 Whom the king to the ranks of knighthood hath lifted, I ween, this morn.'
 'And one who in strife is skilful and bold doth the vanguard lead,
 Poidikonjonz of Gros, and with him hath he many an armed steed.
 And Meljanz is son to his brother; and haughty of heart the twain,
 The young as the old, I think me discourtesy here doth reign!
 'Thus these two kings, moved by anger, will forth unto Beausrosch ride,
 Where with toil he would win the favour that the maid to his love denied.
 And there with thrust and onslaught shall be broken many a spear;
 Yet so well is Beausrosch guarded that, tho' twenty hosts were here,
 Each one than our army greater, it ne'er to our force would yield!
 The rear-guard knoweth naught of my journey, from the others I stole this shield,
 Lest perchance my lord should find here a joust, and with onslaught fierce
 And clash of the meeting chargers the spear thro' his shield might pierce.'

Then the squire he looked behind him, and his lord on his track did ride,
 Three steeds and twelve spears unsplintered sped onward his rein beside.
 And I ween that his haste betrayed him, he would fain in the foremost flight
 The first joust for his own have challenged, so read I the tale aright.
 Then the squire he spake unto Gawain, 'Thy leave I, Sir Knight, would pray,'
 And he turned him again to his master—What should Gawain do alway
 Save see how this venture ended? Yet awhile he doubted sore,
 And he thought, 'If I look on conflict, and fight not as aye of yore,
 Then methinks shall my fame be tarnished; and yet if I here delay,
 E'en tho' it may be for battle, then in sooth is it reft away,
 My meed of worldly honour—To fight not, methinks, were best,
 First must I fulfil my challenge.' But afresh doubt vexed his breast,
 For he deemed that his warlike errand but little might brook delay,
 Yet how could he take his journey thro' this army that barred his way?
 And he quoth, 'Now God give me counsel, and strengthen my manhood's might,'
 And on to the town of Beaurisch rode Gawain as gallant knight.
 So before him lay Burg and city; fairer dwelling no man might know;
 Already it shone before him with its turrets in goodly row,
 The crown of all other castles—Before it the army lay
 On the plain 'neath the walls of the city; thro' the lines must he take his way,
 And right well he marked, Sir Gawain, many tents in a goodly ring,
 And strange banners waved beside them, which strange folk to the fight would bring;
 And doubt in his heart found dwelling, by eagerness cleft in twain—
 Then straight thro' the host encamped there rode the gallant knight Gawain.
 One tent-rope it touched the other, tho' the camp it was long and wide,
 And he saw how they lay, and he noted the task which each one there plied.
 Quoth they, '*Soit bien venu*' then '*Gramercy*' the knight for an answer gave—
 And troops from Semblidag lay there, hired soldiers both strong and brave;
 And closely they camped beside them, the archers from Kahetei—
 And strangers are oft unfriendly; As King Lot's son he passed them by
 No man of them all bade him tarry, so he rode o'er the grassy plain,
 And toward the beleaguered city Sir Gawain he turned his rein.
 Then he thought, 'Must I e'en as a smuggler, in hiding-place bestow
 My goods, then the town is safer, methinks, than the plain below,
 Nor on gain shall my thoughts be turnèd, for this be my care alone,
 An Fate will so far befriend me, to guard that which is mine own!'
 To the city gate he rode thus, and he found that which worked him woe,
 None too costly the Burgers deemed it, but their portals against the foe
 Had they walled up; well armed the watch-towers, and he saw on each rampart high
 Archers, with cross-bow bended that their bolts 'gainst the foe might fly.
 For defence and defiance ready on the battlements they stood.
 Up the hillside toward the castle he turned him, that hero good.
 Tho' little he knew the pathway to the Burg came the gallant knight,
 And straightway his eyes beheld them, full many a lady bright,
 For the prince's wife had come there, from the hall abroad to gaze,
 And daughters twain stood by her, bright as the sunlight's rays.
 Then they spake in such wise as Gawain right well their words might hear—
 'Now, who is this,' quoth the mother, 'who doth to our aid draw near?
 Where goes he with pack-horse laden?' Spake the elder daughter fair,
 'Nay, mother, 'tis but a merchant!' 'Yet he many a shield doth bear.'
 'Such shall oft be the wont of merchants!' Then the younger sister spake,
 'Thou sayest the thing that is not, and shame to thyself shouldst take,
 For surely he is no merchant! My knight shall he be straightway,
 If his service here craveth guerdon, such debt I were fain to pay!'

Now the squires they saw how a linden and olive-trees stood fair
 Beneath the walls, and they thought them how a welcome shade were there.
 What would ye more? Then King Lot's son he straight to the ground did spring
 Where the shade was best, and his servants, they swift to their lord would bring
 A cushion fair and a mattress, and the proud knight he sat thereon;
 From on high gazed a crowd of ladies—Then, as he his rest had won,
 They lift adown from the pack-steeds the chests, and the harness bright,
 And beneath the trees they laid them who rode here with the gallant knight.
 Spake the elder duchess, 'Daughter, what merchant think thou would fare
 In such royal guise? Thou wrongest his rank who now sitteth there!'
 Then out quoth the younger sister, 'Discourteous she aye shall be,
 With pride and scorn did she treat him, our king, Meljanz of Lys,
 When her love he besought—unseemly such words and ways I trow!'
 Then spake Obie, for anger moved her, 'I see naught in that man below!
 There sitteth, methinks, a merchant, and he driveth a goodly trade;
 He would that they well were guarded, the chests that his steeds do lade,
 And like to a brooding dragon, O foolish sister mine,
 O'er his treasure-chest he watcheth, this gallant *knight* of thine!'
 And each word that they spake, the maidens, fell clear on Gawain's ear—
 Leave we their speech, of the city and its peril ye now must hear.
 A water that ships had sailed on 'neath a bridge of stone flowed past,
 And the land here was clear of foemen, nor its flood held their armies fast.
 A marshal came swiftly riding 'fore the bridge on the plain so wide,
 And a goodly camp had he marked out ere his lord to the field should ride.
 And he came e'en as they were ready, and with him came many more—
 I will tell ye their names who, for truth's sake, and the love they to Lippaut bore,
 Here rode to his aid—His brother, men called him Duke Marangliess,
 And two swift knights came with him from the land of Brevigariez;
 King Schirniel, the gallant monarch who ware crown in Lirivoin,
 And with him there rode his brother, the monarch of Avendroin.
 Now when the Burgers saw well that help drew anigh their wall
 They deemed that an evil counsel which aforetime seemed good to all—
 Then out spake their lord, Duke Lippaut, 'Alas! for the woeful hour
 That Beaurosch must seal its portals against the foeman's power!
 Yet if I against my master in open field had fought,
 Then mine honour, methinks, were smitten, and my courtesy brought to naught.
 His grace would beseem me better, and gladden me more, I ween,
 Than the hatred which now he showeth, of such hate have I guiltless been.
 A joust that his hand had smitten but little would grace *my* shield.
 Or if *his* of the sword bare token that I 'gainst my king would wield.
 Methinketh, tho' wise the woman, she were shamed an she praised such deed—
 Yea, say that my king were captive in my tower, I my lord had freed,
 And myself had become his prisoner—what had pleased him best to do
 Of evil, I'd gladly bear it, as befitted a vassal true,
 And I thank my God of a true heart that I here, a free man, stand,
 Tho' spurred by love and anger my king doth invade my land!'
 Then he quoth again to the Burgers, 'Now may wisdom with ye be found
 To counsel me in the perils that compass my path around.'
 Then many a wise man answered, 'Thou hast wrought in no wise amiss,
 Might innocence win its guerdon, then thou never hadst come to this.'
 Then all with one voice they counselled that the gates be opened wide,
 And that he should bid their bravest forthwith unto jousting ride.
 And they quoth, 'So to fight were better than thus our ramparts high
 To defend 'gainst our king, and the armies twofold that around us lie,
 For the most part they are but children who ride with their king to-day,

And 'twere easy to take a hostage, so wrath oft is turned away.
 And the king he shall be so minded, that if here knightly deeds be done,
 He shall free us perchance from our peril, and the ending of wrath be won.
 Far better in field to seek them than forth from our walls be brought
 As their captives—Nay, e'en to their tent-ropes, methinks, we with ease had fought
 Were it not for the King Poidikonjonz, 'neath his banner the bravest fight;
 And there is our greatest peril, the captive Breton knights,
 Duke Astor it is who leads them, and foremost in strife are they;
 And the king's son is there, Meljakanz; higher his fame to-day
 Had Gurnemanz been his teacher! Yet never he feareth fight;
 But help have we found against them,—Now their rede have ye heard aright.
 Then the prince he did as they counselled, the portals he open brake,
 And the Burgers who ne'er lacked courage their way to the field would take.
 Here one jousted, and there another; and the armies they made their way
 With high courage towards the city, right good was their vesper-play.
 On both sides the troops were countless; manifold was their battle-cry,
 And Scotch and Welsh might ye hearken, for in sooth here I tell no lie.
 And stern were their deeds of knighthood as fitting so stern a fight,
 And bravely those heroes battled, till weary each gallant knight.
 And they were little more than children who with the king's army came,
 And they took them as pledge in a corn-field, who thought there to win them fame,
 And he who had ne'er won token of love from a lady fair,
 Might never more costly raiment on his youthful body bear;
 Of Meljanz the venture telleth that in harness bright he rode,
 On high flamed his youthful courage—A charger the king bestrode
 That Meljakanz won when in jousting his foe from his steed he swung,
 'Twas Kay, and so high he smote him that aloft from a bough he hung;
 There Meljakanz won the charger that Meljanz would ride that day,
 And foremost of all the heroes he strove in the knightly fray.
 And Obie beheld his jousting, and watched him with eager eye,
 As she stood there among her maidens, and gazed from the palace high.
 So quoth she unto her sister, 'See, sister mine, thy knight
 And *mine*, unlike do they bear them, for thine hath no will to fight,
 He thinketh for sure this city and castle we needs must lose.
 An here we would seek defenders, other champion we needs must choose!'
 And the younger must bear her mocking—then she spake, 'Yet I trust my knight,
 He hath time yet to show his courage, and thy mockery put to flight.
 For here shall he do me service, and his gladness shall be my care,
 An thou holdest him for a merchant, with me shall he trade full fair!'
 As with words they strove, the maidens, he hearkened, the Knight Gawain,
 Yet he made as tho' he heard not as he sat on the grassy plain.
 And if knightly soul should hearken, nor feel in the hearing shame,
 'Twould but be that death had freed him from burden of praise or blame.
 Now still lay the mighty army that Poidikonjonz had led,
 Save one gallant youth with his vassals, who swift to the combat sped,
 And Lanveronz was his dukedom—Here came Poidikonjonz the king,
 And the old man wise one and other again to the camp would bring,
 For the vesper-play was ended—In sooth had they fought right well,
 And for love of many a maiden full many a deed befell.
 Then out spake the King Poidikonjonz to Lanveronz' gallant knight,
 "'Twere fitting to wait for thy leader, an thou lusted for fame to fight.
 Dost think thou hast borne thee bravely? See the brave Knight Lahduman,
 And here is my son Meljakanz,—Came these two in the van,
 And I myself, then, I think me, that a fair fight thou sure shouldst see
 Wert thou learnèd enow in combat to know what a fight should be!

I come not again from this city till of strife we have had our fill,
 Or man and woman yield them as prisoners to my will!’
 Quoth Duke Astor, ‘The king, thy nephew, O sire fought before the gate
 With his army of Lys—Should thine army here slumber o’er-long and late
 The while these others battled? Say when didst thou teach such lore?
 Must I slumber while others battle then I’ll slumber as ne’er of yore!
 Yet believe me, had I not been there then the Burgers had won them fame,
 And a fair prize their hand had taken—I have guarded thee here from shame;
 In God’s Name be no longer wrathful! Such valour thy folk have shown,
 They won more than they lost,—I think me fair Obie the same will own!’
 Yet Poidikonjonz was wrathful with his nephew, Meljanz the king,
 Tho’ of many a joust the token the young knight from the field must bring,
 And youthful fame ne’er mourneth such pledge of strife, I ween—
 Now hear ye again of the maiden who the cause of this strife had been.
 Hate enow did she bear to Gawain who was guiltless of ill intent,
 And shame would she bring upon him—A servant the maiden sent
 Below, to Gawain as he sat there, ‘Now ask thou, without delay,
 If his steeds be for sale—In his coffers, perchance, he doth bear away
 Goodly raiment that we may purchase; say thou if it so shall be,
 Then we ladies above in the castle will buy of him readily.’
 So the serving man went, and his greeting was wrath, for Sir Gawain’s eye
 Taught fear to his heart, and in terror the lad from his face would fly,
 And he asked not, nor gave the message his lady had bid him bear.
 Nor Gawain held his peace, ‘Thou rascal, from hence shalt thou swiftly fare,
 For many a blow will I give thee if again thou dost dare draw near!’
 Then the lad hied him back to his lady; what she did shall ye straightway hear:
 For she bade one speak to the Burg-grave, Scherules they called his name,
 Saying, ‘This shall he do at my bidding for the sake of his manly fame;
 ’Neath the olive-trees by the Burg-moat stand seven steeds, I trow,
 In them shall he find his guerdon, and riches beside enow.
 A merchant will here deal falsely—I pray he prevent such deed.
 I trust in his hand; none shall blame him, if the goods he doth hold for meed.’
 The squire went below as she bade him, and his lady’s plaint he bare;
 ‘From knavery must we guard us,’ quoth Scherules, ‘I forth will fare.’
 So he rode where Gawain was seated whose courage might never fail,
 And he found there all weakness lacking, high heart that for naught would quail,
 And a face so fair to look on—Scherules he saw him well,
 And his arms and hands so skilful that a knightly tale might tell.
 And he spake, ‘Thou art here a stranger, Sir Knight, sure good wit we need
 Since here thou hast found no lodging; as sin shalt thou count such deed.
 I will now myself be marshal, folk and goods, all I call mine own
 That freely shall do thee service; nor host to his guest hath shown
 Such favour as I would show thee.’ ‘Thy favour,’ quoth Knight Gawain,
 ‘As yet shall be undeservèd, yet to follow thee am I fain.’
 Then Scherules, of honour worthy, he spake of a true heart free,
 ‘Since the office hath fallen to me, thy guardian ’gainst loss I’ll be,
 If the outer host would rob thee, thou shalt call to thine aid mine hand,’
 Then, smiling, he spake to the servants whom he saw round their master stand,
 ‘Now load ye again your harness that never a piece shall fail,
 For hence must we ride, and shelter shall ye find in the lower vale.’
 With the Burg-grave he rode, Sir Gawain, nor Obie her wrong would own,
 But she sent a minstrel maiden whom her father right well had known,
 And she bade her bear the tidings, a false coiner had passed that way,
 ‘And goodly and rich is his lading; by his knighthood my father pray,

Since many a hireling serves him for steed, and garb, and gold,
 That he here let them take their payment, 'twere enow, were they sevenfold.'
 To the prince did she tell, the minstrel, all that his daughter said—
 Now to win so rich a booty that his hirelings may be well paid,
 The need right well he knoweth who hath ridden forth to war,
 And Lippaut, the prince so faithful, by his soldiers was pressed full sore—
 Then he thought, 'I must win this treasure or by love or by force to-day.'
 And swiftly he rode; but Scherules, he met him upon his way,
 'Now whither dost ride so swiftly?' 'A knave would I here pursue,
 A false coiner is he, I think me, if the tale I have heard be true!
 Now guiltless in sooth was Gawain, 'twas but thro' his steeds and gold
 That suspicion on him had lighted—Then loud laughed the Burg-grave bold,
 And he quoth, 'Nay, sire, they misled thee, they lied who thus told the tale
 Were it wife, or man, or maiden—Nor knighthood my guest shall fail,
 Far otherwise shalt thou judge him, no die he methinks shall hold;
 Ne'er bare he the purse of the changer, if the tale shall aright be told.
 Look thou on his mien, and hearken his word, in my house is he,
 An knighthood aright thou readest then thou knighthood in him shalt see,
 And ne'er was he bold in falsehood—Whoever hath done him wrong,
 An my child it were, or my father; whose wrath waxeth fierce and strong,
 An my kinsman it be, or my brother, then the rudder of strife shall turn
 'Gainst myself, for I will defend him from the wrong that he ne'er did earn,
 If I with thy will may do so. The knight's garb would I gladly change
 For the hermit's robe of sackcloth, and afar thro' the wide world range
 In a land where none may know me, than here thou shouldst reap thee shame!
 Methinks it would better fit thee to welcome such guests as came,
 Who have heard the tale of thy sorrow, than to rob them of goods and gold;
 'Twould better beseem my master as treason such deed to hold!'
 The prince spake, 'I fain would see him.' 'Methinks 'twill not harm my guest.'
 So he rode where he looked on Gawain, and two eyes and a heart confessed
 (The eyes and the heart of Lippaut) that the stranger was fair to see,
 And knighthood and manly virtue the mate to his mien should be.
 Whosoe'er, by true love constrained, hath felt of true love the pain,
 Then his heart, as right well ye know it, doth forfeit to Love remain,
 And so doth she change and rule it that no mouth can the wonder speak,
 Be it heart of man or of maiden on which she her will would wreak,
 And the wise doth she bend to folly. Now the twain they were lovers true,
 King Meljanz and maiden Obie—His anger ye needs must rue,
 Since in wrath he had ridden from her; of sorrow such load she bare
 That her spirit was moved to anger unfitting a maiden fair.
 And, guiltless, must Gawain suffer, and others must feel her pain;
 She had womanly ways forsaken when she gave to her wrath the rein.
 Whene'er she beheld the hero as a thorn was he to her sight,
 For her heart was fain that Meljanz be held for the bravest knight,
 And she thought, 'Doth he bring me sorrow, then sorrow I'll gladly bear,
 O'er all the world do I love him, my hero, so young and fair,
 And my heart for his love aye yearneth.' Oft anger from love doth grow,
 Nor blame ye o'er-much the maiden if her love she by wrath would show.
 Now list how he spake, her father, as he looked on the Knight Gawain
 And bade him a kindly welcome—In this wise he spake again,
 'Sir Knight, it may be that thy coming the dawn of our bliss hath been;
 Thro' many a land have I journeyed, but no face have I ever seen
 So fair to mine eyes as thy face. In this our day of grief
 Thy coming shall bring us comfort, thro' thee may we find relief.'
 Then he prayed him take part in the conflict—'If harness shall lack to thee

All thou needest will I prepare thee, so here thou wilt fight for me.'
 Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'That would I of right goodwill,
 I am strong, and well armed for battle, yet from strife must I hold me still,
 Nor fight till the hour appointed; or else would I gladly fare
 As thou farest, the fate of battle with thee were I fain to share.
 But now must I needs forego it, for 'tis fitting I first should fight
 With the foeman to whom I pledged me on mine honour as faithful knight.
 By the favour I claim from all true knights my fame must I there defend
 Or die on the field—To this conflict, Sir Knight, I my way would wend!'
 Then a grief were his words to Lippaut, and he quoth, 'By thy knightly fame,
 And thy courtesy, do thou hear me, for free shall I be from blame.
 Two daughters have I, and I love them, and dear to my heart are they,
 In the joy God in them hath given would I live to my dying day.
 Yea, well is me for my children, tho' sorrow thro' them I win,
 And the one of my two fair daughters methinks hath her share therein,
 And unlike, tho' alike, we share it—for thro' Love doth my lord and king
 Work sorrow to her, and thro' Hatred his forces 'gainst me would bring.
 And thus do I read the riddle, my lord worketh ill to me,
 Since a *son* I lack, but I wot well that my *daughters* shall dearer be.
 What, then, if for them I suffer? Then my woe do I count for weal—
 Who hath never an heir save his daughter, tho' the sword ne'er her grip may feel,
 Yet other defence may she bring him, she may win him a son and heir;
 And such is my hope!'—Quoth Gawain, 'God grant thee this favour fair!'
 Then Lippaut he sorely pressed him, 'In God's name give thy pleading o'er,
 Spake the son of King Lot, 'I pray thee, of thy courtesy ask no more,
 Nor let me betray mine honour—Yet this will I do, Sir Knight,
 I will think the thing o'er, and my answer shalt thou have ere it draw to night.'
 Then he thanked him, the prince, and he rode forth; in the courtyard he found alway
 His child with the Burg-grave's daughter; with rings did the maidens play.
 'Now, daughter mine, whence camest thou?' thus to Obilot he spake,
 'Father, I came from the castle, to the strange knight my way I'd take,
 I would pray him as knight to serve me, methinks he will hear my prayer,
 And do for my sake such service as winneth rewarding fair!'
 'Nay, I fear me, my little daughter, for he saith me nor yea, nor nay,
 But plead thou as I have pleaded.' To the guest did she run straightway.
 So came she to Gawain's chamber, he greeted her courteously,
 At her fairy feet he sat him, and thanked her that, maidenly,
 She spake for him to her sister; and he quoth, 'Now if ever a knight
 Had fought for so small a maiden, I were ready for thee to fight!'
 Then the little maiden tender spake out so frank and free,
 'Sir Knight, as God is witness, the first man thou aye shalt be
 With whom I have held free converse; if in this my maiden shame
 And my courtesy I wrong not, then joy as reward I claim!
 For ever my mistress taught me how speech is the crown of thought,
 And I pray thee, Sir Knight, to help us—Thro' sorrow thine aid I sought;
 An thou wilt, all our need I'll tell thee, nor do thou be wroth with me,
 For I do as befits a maiden, and my prayer to *myself* shall be.
 For altho' our name be diverse, yet methinks that *thou* art *I*,
 Take thou my name, and maiden and knight art thou verily.
 This grace from us both do I pray here, and if I from hence must go
 Ashamed, and my prayer unanswered, then, Sir Knight, I would have thee know
 That thy knightly fame must answer to thy knightly courtesy,
 Since my maidenhood sought for shelter in vain in thy chivalry.
 But if thou indeed wilt hearken, and do me this thing I ask,
 With a true heart true love I'll give thee as rewarding for knightly task.'

'And art thou true man and courteous, then surely thou'lt do my will,
 For see, wilt thou serve a maiden, I am worthy thy service still.
 'Tis true that my father kinsman and cousin for help hath prayed,
 But for that shalt thou not refuse us, for my love shalt thou give thine aid!
 Then he quoth, 'Thy lips, sweet maiden, would bid me my word forswear,
 Wouldst have me my pledge to forfeit? On my knightly honour fair
 I pledged my word—An I fail me, 'twere better methinks to die.
 Yet, e'en an I did thee service for thy love, still long years must fly
 Ere yet thou shalt be a woman, and my service might well approve.'
 Then he thought how Parzival trusted less in God than in woman's love,
 And the words he spake bare the message of the maid unto Gawain's heart;
 And he vowed to the little lady to bear arms on her father's part,
 And, laughing, he spake, 'My sword-blade thy little hand must guide,
 If my foeman a fair joust seeketh, then thou must against him ride;
 And for me shalt thou strive in conflict, for tho' men think they see *me* fight
 Yet *thou* in my stead shalt have battled,—so keep I my pledge aright.'
 Then she spake, 'That will I, right gladly, thy shelter and shield I'll be,
 Thine heart, and thine heart's best comfort, since from grief thou hast set me free.
 Thy friend will I be and comrade, and whatever chance betide,
 A roof 'gainst misfortune's stormcloud, safe dwelling wherein to hide.
 True peace this my love shall give thee, Good Fortune to thee I'll bring;
 That-thy strength may by naught be vanquished, I'll guard thee 'gainst host and king.
 Host am I alike and hostess—To combat I'll ride with thee,
 An thou keepest my words in remembrance strength and bliss shall thy portion be.'
 Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'Yea, maiden, the twain I'll share,
 Since my life I vow to thy service, thy love and thy comfort fair.'
 And the hand of the little maiden the while in his strong clasp lay—
 Then she quoth, 'To fulfil mine office I must hence to the Burg away,
 Wouldst thou fare forth without my aiding, and without my token fight?
 Nay, for that all too dear I hold thee—My part will I play aright,
 And my token I will prepare thee, and if thou my pledge shalt bear
 Then I wot well that o'er all others thy glory shall blossom fair.'
 Then they went forth, the little maidens, and Gawain, the stranger guest,
 They thanked with sweet words and kindly, and thus he his speech addrest,
 'When older ye twain shall be waxen, were they spears, every woodland bough,
 And the forest bare naught but spear-shafts, then too poor were the crop, I trow!
 If your childhood shall thus be powerful, what then of your maidenhood?
 For your favour brave knights shall shatter both strong shield and spear-shaft good!'
 Then forth sped the little maidens, and their hearts they were glad and gay;
 And she spake, the Burg-grave's daughter, 'Lady, I prithee say
 What wilt give to thy knight for a token, since naught but our dolls have we?
 An mine were but somewhat fairer I would give it right willingly
 Nor be wroth with thee for the taking, we should strive not o'er that I ween!'
 Then Lippaut the prince o'ertook them half-way on the hillside green,
 And he saw Obilot and Clauditté, as up towards the Burg they sped,
 And he bade them stand still, and await him, and his daughter towards him fled.
 'Father, I never needed thy help as I do to-day,
 Now give me I pray thy counsel, for the knight he hath said me yea.'
 'Whate'er be thy will, little daughter, an I may, I will give it thee,
 For happy the day whose dawning brought thee, a fair gift to me,
 Then Good Fortune smiled sweetly on me.' 'I will tell thee, my father dear,
 But the thing that so sore doth vex me thou must it in secret hear,
 So hearken, and do as I pray thee!' Then he bade them to lift the maid
 On his charger, 'But what of my playmate?' Many knights round their leader stayed,
 And they strove which of them should take her, for each one well pleased would be,

Then one as his prize he claimed her, for Clauditté was fair to see.
Then riding, he spake, her father, 'Now Obilot tell to me
How dost thou need my counsel? What is it that vexeth thee?'
'I have promised my knight a token, and my wits were I ween astray,
If nothing I find to give him then worthless my life to-day;
Since he vowed unto me his service then in sooth must I blush for shame,
If I give him naught—Never hero truer love from a maid might claim!'
Then he quoth, 'Trust to me, little daughter, and thy token I will prepare,
If service from him thou winnest thou shalt give him his payment fair,
If thy mother she too be willing—God grant he may bring us aid,
That gallant knight and worthy; what trust I on him have laid!
Tho' never a word to the hero had I spoken before to-day,
Yet last night in a dream I saw him, as asleep on my couch I lay.'
Then Lippaut he sought the Duchess, and with him he led the maid,
And he quoth, 'Now lady, help us, for we twain sorely need thine aid;
And my heart would shout for gladness that God gave me this maiden fair,
And parted me from the sorrow that I all guiltless bare.'
Then out spake the Duchess, 'Tell me, what wilt thou of my grace?'
'Lady, since thou wilt hearken, this maid craves a better dress,
And she deems she of right may ask it, since a knight will her token bear,
And he asketh her love, and he offers to do for her service fair.'
Then out spake the maiden's mother, 'Ah, good and gallant knight!
Of the stranger I ween thou speakest, as May-tide his glance of light.'
Then samite of Ethnisé the wise mistress she bade them bear
And rich stuffs as yet unsevered, and silk of Tabronit fair
From far Tribalibot's kingdom—Red the gold on Caucasus' strand,
And fair is I ween the raiment which the heathen, with cunning hand,
Wrought from silk, with the gold inwoven—And Lippaut, the prince, he bade
That therefrom for his little daughter fitting garments should straight be made.
Nor the best would he grudge to the maiden, and they shaped her a garment fair,
Of silk that with gold was heavy; but one white arm they left yet bare,
And a sleeve that the arm had covered from the vesture they cut away,
This should Gawain win for his token and badge in the coming fray.
So this was the gift that she gave him, a rich silk of Orient bright,
That was brought from the land of the paynim, and had covered her arm so white.
But they sewed it not to the garment, nor wrought it at all with thread,
And Clauditté to Gawain bare it, when home from the Burg she sped.
And free from all care was the hero; and three were his shields so bright,
And on one straightway he bound it, and glad was the gallant knight;
And fairest thanks he gave her, and oft would he praise the road
On which the maid had trodden when she sought him in his abode,
And so gently bade him welcome, and with sweet words and maiden wile
Had made him rich in gladness, and made joy on his path to smile.
Now the daylight had waned, and the night fell,—many valiant knights and good,
A mighty force, lay on each side,—the besiegers were e'en a flood.
Were they less, for the folk of the city their army enow should be.
And now by the light of the moonbeams they would fain to their outworks see;
Nor terror nor cowardice moved them, they were ready ere break of day,
Twelve breast-works wide, and a deep moat before every earth-work lay.
Thus they shielded them well from onslaught, and to every earth-work wide
Were barbicans three, that the army might forth to the conflict ride.
And at four of the gates the Marshal, Kardefablet of Jamore,
With his army bravely battled, as men well at the dawning saw.
And the rich Duke fought full knightly; he was brother to Lippaut's wife,
And stronger in heart than others who yet bear them well in strife,

And for men of war are reckoned—In conflict he grief would bear—
 With nightfall his host drew nearer, from far land would he hither fare,
 For but seldom from stress of battle or conflict he turned aside,
 And four of their gates he guarded right well in his warlike pride.
 The force from beyond the river passed o'er it ere morning light,
 And entered the walls of Beausosch, as Lippaut should deem it right.
 But they of Jamore had ridden o'er the bridge before the gate,
 And every door was guarded, and warlike their foes they wait,
 Ere ever the day had dawnèd—Scherules one door would ward,
 Which he and the brave Knight Gawain would let not from out their guard.
 And there had ye heard lamentation from the lips of many a knight,
 And the best they were who mourned thus, they had failed here to see the fight,
 For the vesper-play was ended ere yet they a joust might share.
 Yet needless their lamentation, for countless they proffered there
 To all who had lust for battle, and to joust in the field would ride.
 In the streets saw ye many a hoof-track, and there drew in on every side
 Full many a tossing banner by the light of the moonbeam's ray.
 And many a costly helmet would they wear in the joust that day,
 And spears with bright colours blazoned—A Regensburg silk, I ween,
 Had been held of little value 'fore Beausosch on the meadow green.
 For many a coat emblazoned had ye looked upon that day,
 Whose goal had methinks been higher in the cost that its lord would pay.
 And the night, as of old her custom, had yielded her place to day,
 Nor by song of the lark might they know it, for they hearkened far other lay,
 Whose voice was the voice of warfare with the crash of the splintered spear,
 As a cloud that is cleft and riven when the thunderbolt falleth near.
 And the King of Lys' young army sought the host of Lirivoin,
 And there, with his warriors, battled the monarch of Avendroin;
 And many a joust rang loudly, e'en as when one is wont to throw
 Chestnuts within the furnace that burst in the fiery glow.
 Ah, me! how they strove together that morn on the grassy plain,
 How the knights spurred their steeds to jousting, and the Burgers they fought amain.
 Now Gawain, and his host the Burg-grave, since it health to their souls might bring,
 And yield them a meed of blessing, bade a priest a Mass to sing;
 And he sang unto God and the heroes—And the prize of their fame waxed fair,
 For this was their pious bidding—Then they would to their post repair,
 But their rampart ere this was guarded by many a gallant knight,
 The followers they of Scherules, and well would those heroes fight.
 And what should I tell ye further? Poidikonjonz was proud I ween,
 And he came with such host, if in Schwarzwald each bough had a spearshaft been
 I had looked on no greater forest than here on this field ye saw.
 And six banners they bare, and early to battle would nearer draw,
 With ringing blasts of trumpet e'en as thunder that wakeneth fear,
 And drums strove amain with the trumpets, and smote on the listening ear.
 If a grass blade were left untrampled by the conflict I knew it not—
 E'en now shall the Erfurt vineyards show such tokens of strife, I wot!
 Then hither he came, Duke Astor, and he fought with the men of Jamore,
 And for sharp joust the spears they whetted, and many a knight they bore
 From his saddle down on the meadow, and for combat they aye were fain;
 And clear rang the stranger war-cries—And masterless o'er the plain
 Sped many a gallant charger, and afoot went the fallen knight,
 For I ween he had learnt the lesson how one oft is o'erthrown in fight.
 Then he saw, the gallant Gawain, how out on the plain afar
 The host of both friend and foeman were mingled in deadly war;
 And he spurred him swift towards them; nor 'twas light in his steps to tread,

Tho' little they spared their chargers, those knights who behind him sped,
Scherules and his vassals—Gawain gave them pain, I trow,
Ah, me! for the spears he shivered and the knights that he laid alow.
Had God given him not such valour, this knight of the Table Round,
Then in sooth had one made petition for the fame that he there had found.
'Twas all as one, both armies, 'gainst the twain did he set his hand,
That of Gros as of Lys—Many chargers did he win from each knightly band,
And straightway the hero brought them where his host's banner waved on high,
And he asked who was there who should need them? And many swift reply;
Then he gave them e'en as they answered, and rich were they all, I trow,
Thro' this brother-in-arms whose friendship they here for a space should know.
Then there came a knight fast spurring, nor spears did he think to spare
The Lord of Beauvais and Gawain they rode 'gainst each other there,
And the young knight, Lisavander, midst the flowers of the field he lay,
From his saddle behind his charger did Gawain thrust the prince that day.
For the sake of his squire shall this grieve me, who yestreen so courteous spake,
And told to Gawain the tidings, and whence all this woe did wake.
He dismounted, and bent o'er his master, and Gawain he knew his face,
And he gave him the steed he had won there, and the squire thanked his hand of grace.
Now see ye how Kardefablet himself on the ground doth stand
From a joust that was ridden against him, and aimed by young Meljanz' hand;
From the ground his warriors lift him, and loud rings the battle-cry
'Jamore!' and the clashing sword-blades to the challenge make swift reply.
And closer the fight draws round him, onslaught on onslaught pressed,
And the blows ring loud and deafening that fall on each knightly crest.
Then Gawain called his men around him, and swift to his aid he sped,
And he covered the knight with the banner of his host that flew high o'erhead,
And many brave knights had been felled there—Tho' witness I never knew,
Yet in sooth ye may well believe me for the venture it telleth true!
Then the Count of Montane rode 'gainst Gawain, and a goodly joust they ran,
And behind his horse, on the meadow, lay the brave Knight Lahduman,
And the hero, proud and gallant, his pledge unto Gawain gave.
And nearest of all to the ramparts fought Duke Astor with heroes brave,
And many a joust was ridden, and many a spear was crossed;
'Nantes! Nantes!' came the war-cry pealing, the cry of King Arthur's host,
Firm they stood, and no whit they yielded, the captive Breton knights,
And hirelings from Erec's kingdom and men spake of their deeds of might—
The Duke of Lanveronz led them—So well did they fight that day
That Poidikonjonz well might free them, since his captives they were alway;
At the mountain Cluse from King Arthur, in the days that were long gone by,
As his prisoners did he win them, when they stormed him right valiantly.
And here, as was aye their custom, where'er they might chance to fight,
They shouted 'Nantes' as their war-cry, 'twas the way of these men of might;
And many had waxed grey-bearded, and on every Breton breast
Or high on their helmet gleaming stood a Gampilon for their crest.
For as Ilino's arms they bare it, who was Arthur's gallant son—
And Gawain he sighed as he saw it (small fame he 'gainst these had won).
And his heart awoke to sorrow for the blazon right well he knew,
And it filled him again with anguish for the death of his kinsman true.
And his eyes ran o'er with tear-drops, and he passed them upon the field,
Nor with them would he fight—Thus to friendship a hero full oft shall yield!
Then he rode on to Meljanz' army, whom the Burgers with might withstood,
And their rightful meed of honour they won from the warriors good;
Tho' perforce 'gainst o'ermastering numbers they had failed to hold the field,
And backward within their trenches awhile to the foe must yield.

And he who the Burgers challenged his harness glowed red as flame,
 'The Nameless Knight' they called him for none knew from whence he came;
 And I tell it to ye as I heard it, to Meljanz he rode, this knight,
 But three days back, and the Burgers must mourn it in coming fight
 That he swore his aid to their foeman—Twelve squires unto him he gave,
 To serve him as meet in the jousting, and to follow to onslaught brave.
 And the spears their hand might proffer those spears he right swiftly brake,
 And clear rang his joust o'er the tumult, when he did as his captives take
 King Schirniel and his brother; nor he would from his pledge release
 The knight whom he here had vanquished, the Duke of Marangliess.
 And bravely they fought mid the foremost, and he vanquished them as they stood,
 Yet their folk still held them valiant tho' reft of their leaders good.
 And there fought the young King Meljanz, and all were they friend or foe,
 They owned greater deeds of valour a young knight might seldom show;
 By his hand were the strong shields cloven—Ah! the spears that he brake in twain
 As the forces together mingling dashed swift o'er the battle-plain.
 And his young heart for conflict lusted, and none gave him of strife his fill.
 And it vexed him sore, till Gawain would joust with him at his will.
 Then Gawain took a spear of Angram, that he won him at Plimizöl,
 And twelve were those spears—The war-cry of Meljanz was 'Barbigöll'
 Of his kingdom of Lys 'twas chief city—Gawain aimed his joust so true,
 And Oraste Gentesein taught sorrow to the king since it pierced him thro'
 That strong shaft of reed; his shield piercing, it brake in his arm of might—
 And a fair joust again was ridden, and Gawain smote the King in flight;
 And the hinder bow of the saddle it brake, and those heroes twain
 They stood on their feet, and valiant, they battled with swords amain.
 'Twere more than enough such labour for two churls on the threshing-floor,
 And each one bare the sheaf of the other, and each smote the other sore.
 And a spear must Meljanz carry that had smitten him thro' the arm,
 And thro' conflict fierce the hero in blood and sweat waxed warm.
 Then Gawain by force he drave him within a portal wide,
 And he bade him his pledge to swear him, nor the young king his will defied;
 Were he not so sorely wounded then so swiftly he ne'er were known,
 To yield himself to a foeman, but his prowess had longer shown.
 Then Lippaut the prince, the land's host, his valour might not restrain
 With the monarch of Gros he battled; and alike must they suffer pain,
 Both man and steed from the bow-shots, for their skill they were fain to show,
 They of Semblidag, and Kahetines, for they fled as they bent the bow.
 And the Burgers must well bethink them the foe from their lines to hold,
 But foot-soldiers had they, and sheltered by their ramparts they battled bold.
 And he who of life was forfeit for the wrath of a maid must pay,
 For her folly and scorn on her people brought sorrow enow that day.
 But what part therein had Lippaut? I think me his lord of old,
 King Schaut, ne'er had thus beset him! Now faint waxed those heroes bold.
 But Meljakanz still fought bravely—Do ye think it was whole, his shield?
 Not a hand's-breadth wide was the fragment—Then he bare him across the field
 Duke Kardefablet, and I think me the Tourney it came to stand
 On the meadow fair and flowery, for fast locked was either band.
 Then Gawain he rode swiftly to them, and he pressed Meljakanz so sore,
 E'en Launcelot, gallant hero, ne'er wrought him such grief afore
 When the sword bridge he crossed to battle—Her captivity pleased him ill,
 The Queen Guinevere, and he thought him by the sword-blade to free her still.
 King Lot's son he rode full gallop—Meljakanz, what could he do
 But spur his steed towards him? And many that joust must view.
 Who lay there behind his charger? He whom the gallant knight

Of Norroway had smitten to earth with his spear of might.
 And many a knight and lady they looked on this joust so fair,
 And they spake in praise of Gawain, and his fame would aloud declare.
 And the maidens right well might see it as they looked from the hall on high.
 Underfoot was Meljakanz trampled; many steeds did o'er him fly,
 And tare with their hoofs his surcoat, who fodder might taste no more,
 And they covered the prostrate hero with rain of sweat and gore.
 'Twas a day of doom for the chargers, but the vultures at will might feast;
 And Duke Astor he came to the rescue, and from them of Jamore released
 Meljakanz, or else was he captive, and he raised him from off the ground—
 And the Tourney was o'er, and the combat methinks had its ending found.
 Now who had as knight best ridden, or best for a maiden fought?
 Nay, I know not, an I would name them small leisure such task had brought.
 For Maid Obilot's sake with the townsfolk a knight valiant deeds had dared;
 Without, a Red Knight fought bravely, and the fame 'twixt those two was shared.
 When the guest of the outer army had learnt he no thanks might win
 From the king he had served, since Meljanz was captive the town within,
 He rode where his squires were waiting, and thus to his prisoners spake,
 'Sir Knights, ye your word have pledged me; ill-chance doth me here o'ertake,
 For King Meljanz of Lys is captive—Now if ye such grace can find
 With his captors, that for *your* freedom *his* fetters they will unbind,
 Such service I'd gladly do him!' To the King of Avendroin
 He spake, and to Duke Marangliess, and King Schirmiel of Lirivoin.
 And this oath must they swear unto him, ere they rode the walls within,
 To loose Meljanz, or if they failed here, to help him the Grail to win.
 But never a word could they tell him of where It was hid, the Grail,
 Save 'twas guarded by King Anfortas, but further, their lore must fail.
 When thus they spake, quoth the Red Knight, 'Then if it shall still betide
 That my wish find not here fulfilment, ye to Pelrapär shall ride,
 And unto the fair queen yielding say, "He who in days of yore
 Faced Kingron for her and Klamidé, for the Grail now sorroweth sore,
 As he yearneth for her, his lady, and after the twain in thought
 And deed is he ever striving," To her be this message brought
 And ye heroes bear it truly, and as on your way ye ride
 God have ye in His safe keeping, for the world and its ways are wide.'
 Then they prayed his leave, and they rode hence—And the knight to his squires he spake,
 'Here is booty none may gainsay us, of these steeds ye at will may take;
 But leave me one for my riding, since sore wounded mine own shall be.'
 Spake the Squires, 'Sir Knight, we must thank thee for the grace thou hast shown us free,
 For our lifetime hast thou enriched us.' Then he chose in his charger's stead,
 With the close-cropped ears, Ingliart, the same that from Gawain fled,
 When Meljanz he made his captive, and the twain they must fall in field,
 And the Red Knight's hand had caught it, when hewn was many a shield.
 Then Farewell the hero bade them—Full fifteen steeds they tell,
 To the squires he left, unwounded, in sooth might they thank him well.
 And they prayed him to linger with them, and abide with them yet a space,
 But far hence lay the goal he was seeking, and the road he was fain to trace.
 So he turned him about, the hero, to where ease should be bought full dear
 For naught but strife was he seeking—In the days that ye read of here
 No knight e'en as he had battled—Then the outer host would ride
 To where they might find a lodging, and in peace for a space abide.
 And within, Lippaut spake, and asked them how matters had gone that day?
 That Meljanz was taken captive, that tale did he know alway.
 And all was as he would have it, and comfort the hour would bear—
 And Gawain loosed the sleeve full gently from his shield, lest perchance it tear,

For he deemed it o'er good for tearing, and Clauditté she held it fast,
 And 'twas slashed in the sides and the centre with the spears that had thro' it passed;
 And he bade her to Obilot bear it, and glad was the little maid,
 On her bare white arm soft-rounded the tattered sleeve she laid,
 And spake, 'Who hath done this for me?' whene'er she her sister saw,
 And wrathful her elder sister her maiden mischief bore.
 Then, as weariness it bade them, the knights they craved for rest—
 Then Scherules took Count Lahduman, and Gawain his gallant guest
 And many a knight whom he found there, whom Gawain with valiant hand
 Had o'erthrown on the field of battle tho' strife they might well withstand.
 And the Burg-grave rich he bade them to sit them in order fair,
 And he and his wearied vassals would stand 'fore their monarch there
 Till Meljanz his fill had eaten—And they treated him courteously,
 But Gawain, o'er-much he deemed it, and he spake out, frank and free,
 'Methinks an the king allow thee, Sir Host, thou shouldst take a seat.'
 Thus spake Gawain in his wisdom, as his courtesy found it meet.
 But the host gave his prayer denial, 'The king's man is that gallant knight
 My master, this were his office if the king had but deemed it right
 To take, as of old, his service—My lord thro' his courtesy
 Will not see the face of his monarch while exiled from grace is he.
 An it pleaseth God of friendship to sow here the seed once more,
 Then joyful we'll do his bidding with one will, as in days of yore.'
 Then spake the youthful Meljanz, 'Yea, courteous knights and true
 Were ye, when I dwelt among ye, nor your rede did I ever rue.
 An I now had thy counsel followed, this even had seen me glad;
 Now give me thine aid Count Scherules, for the trust that I ever had
 In thy faith, with this knight my captor, and with him my second sire
 Duke Lippaut—for well I think me they will do as thou shalt require—
 Yea, pray them to show me favour, for friends had we been to-day
 Had not Obie such jest played on me as no maiden I ween should play!'

Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'Afresh shall be knit a band
 That naught but death can sever'—Then they came whom the Red Knight's hand
 Without had taken captive, on the height would they seek their king,
 And they told him all that befell them; and Gawain must list the thing,
 And they told of the arms of the hero, how their strength before his must fail,
 And how he their pledge had taken, and had bidden them seek the Grail;
 And he thought how the knight of this venture was none other than Parzival,
 And his thanks uprose to high Heaven that no evil did there befall,
 But that God apart had held them, and they met not in strife that day.
 And courteous I ween were those heroes that they tore not the veil away,
 But both of them there were nameless, and none knew from whence they came,
 Yet I wot well the world around them rang fair with their warlike fame.
 To Meljanz he spake, Scherules, 'Now, Sire, wilt thou list to me?
 Look thou again on my master, and such rede as is given to thee
 By friends on both sides shalt thou hearken, and thine anger shalt thou recall.'
 And all deemed it good, the counsel, so they rode to the royal hall,
 The inner force of the city, as the Marshal was fain to pray.
 Then Gawain took the Count Lahduman, and the captives he made that day,
 And he gathered them all around him, and the pledge that to him they gave
 When he erst on the field o'erthrew them, must they yield to the Burg-grave brave,
 And gladly they did his bidding—To the palace the heroes fare,
 And rich garments as fit for a monarch did the wife of the Burg-grave bear;
 And a veil did she give unto Meljanz that should serve him for a sling
 For the arm that Gawain had wounded, when his spear smote the youthful king.
 And Gawain by the mouth of Scherules, Obilot his lady prayed;

Fain would the hero see her, his life in her hand he laid,
 And would crave from her lips dismissal—and further the hero spake,
 'I leave the king here, her captive, and I pray her such thought to take
 That she may in such wise entreat him, that her honour shall wax apace!'

And Meljanz spake, 'Well I know this, Obilot is of maiden grace
 And maiden worth the glory; and joyful am I at heart
 If her captive I be, for in gladness methinks shall I have my part,'
 Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'Her prisoner art thou alone,
 'Tis *she* who hath captive made thee, and *my* glory is here her own.'

Before them rode Scherules—As was fitting for royal court,
 Nor man was there nor maiden but had robed them in such sort
 That one, in poor guise and scanty, might scarce have been seen that day—
 They who swore their pledge to the Red Knight with Meljanz must take their way.
 And there in the hall of the castle they sat in their order four,
 Lippaut, his wife, and his daughters, as the guests passed within the door.
 Up sprang the host and hastened his lord and king to greet,
 And close pressed the crowd around them as friend with foe did meet;
 By Gawain's side stood Meljanz. 'Now, an it were here thy will,
 Thy friend of old, the Duchess, with kiss would she greet thee still.'

And Meljanz to his host made answer, 'Two ladies I think to see
 From whom I'll take kiss and greeting—but the *third* naught shall win from me.'
 And the parents wept; but the maiden, Obilot, was glad and gay,
 And they greeted their king with kisses; and two beardless kings that day
 They kissed, with the Duke of Marangliess, and the gallant Knight Gawain.
 And they brought him his little lady, and the fair child he clasped again,
 And e'en as a doll he held her so close to his manly breast,
 As joy and delight constrained him, and to Meljanz his speech address:
 'Thine hand hath surety pledged me, of that shall thou now be free,
 In my right arm I hold my lady, *her* captive thou now shalt be.'

Then Meljanz he stept him nearer, and she held fast to Gawain's hand,
 And she took the pledge of her monarch mid the knights who did round them stand.
 'Sir King, 'twas ill-done I think me, if a *merchant* he be my knight
 As my sister hath said, to yield thee as his captive on field of might!'

Thus spake Obilot, the maiden; then to Meljanz she gave command,
 He should yield his pledge to her sister, and swear it hand clasped in hand;
 'Thou shalt have her for Love, for thy knighthood, as her Love and her Lord art thou
 Henceforward, of true heart gladly, and ye twain to my will shall bow!'

God spake by the lips of the maiden, her will it was done straightway,
 And Frau Minne with power and wisdom again o'er their hearts held sway,
 And knit afresh the meshes, and fettered the twain anew;
 From the folds of her flowing mantle her small hand Obie drew,
 And she touched the arm of her lover, and weeping, her lips so red
 Kissed the wound he had won in jousting, since it was for her sake he bled.
 And his arm was bathed in the tear-drops that flowed from her eyes so bright—
 How waxed she thus bold 'fore the people? 'Twas Love bade her claim her right;
 And fulfilled was the wish of Lippaut, and naught of his bliss should fail,
 Since God had willed that his daughter henceforth as his queen he hail!
 How the wedding feast was holden, ask them who took their share
 Of wedding gifts, or wandering, to Beausrosch had thought to fare.
 If they fought, or were fain to rest them, of that I no word may tell,
 But they say in the hall of the palace Sir Gawain would bid farewell
 To her for whose leave he came there, and sore wept the little maid
 And spake, 'Now take me with thee,' but Gawain her wish gainsaid,
 And scarce might her mother tear her from the knight—leave he prayed them there,
 And Lippaut he proffered service for the good-will he towards him bare.

And his gallant host, Scherules, with his folk he would not delay
 To ride awhile with the hero; and he wended a woodland way,
 And they gave him guides for his journey, and food lest he ill should fare,
 And he bade them farewell, and sorrow Gawain for the parting bare.

BOOK VIII ANTIKONIE

Whosoe'er at Beurososch had battled, methinks that Gawain had won
 The highest fame in both armies, save but for one knight alone;
 And none knew his red harness glowing, and none knew from whence he came,
 But high as a banner waveth, so high did it rise, his fame.
 Yet of honour alike and good fortune had Gawain in full his share—
 Now hence must he ride, for the moment of strife which he sought drew near,
 And far and wide stretched the woodland thro' which he must wend his way—
 No conflict he shunned, tho' all guiltless of the sin men on him would lay.
 But, alas! his charger failed him, Ingliart, with the close-cropped ear,
 In the land of the Moors at Tabronit no better the steeds they rear.
 And diverse the wood around him, here a bush and there a field,
 And so narrow at whiles, that pathway, it scarcely a space might yield
 For tent, or for knight's pavilion. Then fair dwellings met his eye,
 'Twas Askalon, and he prayed them if Schamfanzon at hand did lie?
 But many a marsh and moorland and many a steep hillside
 Must he traverse, ere fair before him in the setting sun he spied
 A fortress stand so stately, it gleamed in the sunlight's rays,
 And he turned his steed towards it who rode here on unknown ways.
 Now list ye awhile the venture, and mourn ye awhile with me
 The sorrow that fell on Gawain—And if old ye shall chance to be
 Or young, yet of this your friendship I pray you his grief to weep;
 Alas! were it best to tell ye, or silence a space to keep?
 Nay, better to tell the story, how he whom Good Luck did call
 Her friend, was by her forsaken, and how grief to his lot must fall.
 So proudly uprose the fortress that never did Carthage seem
 So fair to the eyes of Æneas, when Dido, as failed her dream
 Of love, turned to death and, seeking, found rest in his cold embrace.
 Would ye know what countless turrets those stately halls did grace?
 Scarce more had Akraton boasted, that city whose walls so wide,
 An man may believe the heathen, with Babylon only vied;
 So high rose the circling ramparts, and where to the sea they fell
 No storm might they fear, but defiance could they bid to their foes right well.
 'Fore the city a plain outstretching lay fair for a mile or more.
 As Sir Gawain rode across it, five hundred knights he saw,
 Yet one, o'er all the others, gallant and fair to sight;
 Gaily they rode towards him all clad in raiment bright,
 For so the venture telleth—With their falcons soaring high
 Would they chase the crane, or other fair game that should wingèd fly.
 A tall steed from Spain's far kingdom, King Vergulacht bestrode,
 And his glance was as day in the night-time—Aforetime his race abode
 Where Mazadan reigned as monarch, by Fay Morgan's mystic mount,
 And amid the roll of his fathers he many a fay might count—
 And even as in the spring-tide the May blossom bloometh fair
 So rode the king in his beauty, and Gawain he bethought him there,
 As he saw him ride so stately, 'twas another Parzival,
 Or Gamuret, as he came to Kanvoleis, as this venture erewhile did tell.
 Now into a pond so marshy a heron had taken flight
 As it fled from before the falcon, and the king, as beseemed a knight,
 Sought not for the ford but followed as he saw his falcon's need,

And wet he won in the aiding, and lost was his gallant steed,
 And lost too his royal raiment, tho' safe was I ween the bird.
 The falconers took his garments, for this, so the tale I've heard,
 Was their right, and they needs must have them, and no man might say them nay.
 Another horse they brought him, for lost was his own for aye,
 And fresh garments they put upon him, since such was the chance of fate
 That his falconers won the vesture that had decked their king of late.
 Then Sir Gawain, he rode towards them, and knightly and worshipful
 The greeting they gave unto him, not such as in Karidöl
 Once fell to the lot of Erec, when after his well-fought fight
 He had fain drawn near to King Arthur, and with him his lady bright,
 Fair Enid, who graced his coming—But the dwarf Maliklisier
 With a scourge full hardly smote him, 'neath the eyes of Queen Guinevere.
 At Tulmein he took his vengeance, where, within the ring so wide
 To win the hawk, the heroes in deeds of valour vied.
 'Twas Idër, the son of Noit, a hero true and bold
 Whom he else had slain, whom Erec did there in surety hold.
 But leave we all other venture, and hearken awhile to me,
 For in sooth never fairer welcome shall it fall to your lot to see.
 Yet, alas! for ill it wrought him, Gawain, King Lot's brave son—
 An ye will I will cease my story ere the tale to its end be run,
 And for pity's sake keep silence—Yet perchance it were best to tell
 The ill that thro' others' treason on a gallant spirit fell.
 And if I yet further pray ye this story strange to heed
 Then in sooth, e'en as I, right truly will ye mourn for its hero's need.
 Quoth the king, 'Sir Knight, thus I think me, thou shalt to the castle ride,
 Thine *host* will I be right gladly, tho' scarce may I be thy *guide*;
 Yet if this on my part shall vex thee the chase will I gladly leave!'
 Quoth Gawain, 'As it best may please thee, that do, nor for my sake grieve,
 Whate'er thou shalt do shall be well done—No grudge do I bear thee, Sire,
 But of right good-will I gladly will do as thou shalt require.'
 Quoth the king of Askalon further, 'Schamfanzon thou well mayst see
 Sir Knight, there my sister dwelleth, who as yet but a maid shall be;
 And she hath in fullest measure such beauty as poets sing—
 An thou as a grace shalt hold it, my knights unto her shall bring
 Such word she shall well entreat thee in my stead, till I come again.
 And whenever I come, I think me, 'twill be sooner than thou art fain
 To look on my face, for gladly wilt thou spare me when thou shalt see
 My sweet sister, nor e'er bemoan thee, tho' my coming o'er late shall be!'
 'Nay, gladly again I'll see thee, and gladly thy sister greet,
 Tho' as host never queen has done me such service as host finds meet'
 Thus spake the gallant Gawain—Then a knight bare the king's behest
 To his sister, that she, as fitting, should so care for the stranger guest
 That however long his absence the hours should as minutes fly—
 (An ye will, I will cease my story that now runneth but mournfully!)
 Nay, further I'll tell the venture,—Steed and pathway the hero bore
 Where as one were both Burg and palace, and he held him before the door.
 And he who shall e'er have builded a house, he shall better know
 To tell of this mighty castle, and the strength of its walls to show.
 Yea, indeed 'twas a Burg, none better might this earth on its bosom bear
 And around it, far outstretching, the ramparts towered high in air.
 Leave we the praise of the castle, and speak of the castle's queen,
 A maiden fair, for of women I shall better speak I ween,
 And as fitting I'll sing her praises—Was she fair to the eye? 'Twas well;
 Was she true of heart? Then gladly will men of her praises tell.

And so both in mind and manner might she vie with that lady true,
 The Margravine, who from Heitstein afar o'er her marches threw
 A light,—Well for him who dwelleth as friend in her presence fair,
 Such pastime as there his portion he findeth not other-where!
 For I praise but a woman's virtue, as I see, and shall surely know,
 True and pure must she be, the maiden, on whom I shall praise bestow.
 And he whom this venture singeth is a gallant man and true,
 For no dealing have I with falsehood, or with one who his deeds shall rue,
 As repentance, slowly piercing, but turneth his bliss to bale,
 And his soul knoweth wrath and sorrow, or ever his life-days fail.
 To the castle court rode Gawain, and the goodly company
 To whom the king had sent him, who shamed for his sake should be.
 Then the knight to his lady led him, as she sat in her beauty's glow,
 Queen Antikonie—Could the merchants a woman's fame bestow,
 Of such goods had she made rich purchase; 'gainst falsehood she set her face,
 And hers was the crown of honour, and a maiden's maiden grace.
 Ah! woe's me for him of Veldeck, that death thus cut short his days,
 None is there of all men living who so well could have sung her praise.
 Then Gawain, he looked on the maiden, and the messenger spake the word
 E'en as the king had bade him, and the queen his message heard.
 Then gently she spake to the hero, 'Come thou near unto me, Sir Knight,
 Thyself shalt be my master in courtesy, as is right;
 And gladly I'll do thy bidding—If well it shall please thee here,
 'Twill be even as thou shalt order—Yea, since my brother dear
 Hath bid me well entreat thee, I'll kiss thee, if so I may.
 I'll do, or leave it undone, e'en as thou the word shalt say!'
 Courteous she stood before him, quoth Gawain, 'Thy lips so red
 In sooth were made for kissing, be kiss and greeting sped!'
 So full and warm and rosy were the lips that Gawain pressed,
 No stranger sure had kissed her as kissed this stranger guest.
 Unchecked he sat him by her, and sweet words passed between,
 Soft spake they to each other; and oft renewed, I ween,
 His prayers and her denials, yea, sorely grieved was he,
 And fain to win her favour—Then she spake as I tell to ye:
 'Bethink thee, Sir Knight, thou art wise else, with this I enough have done,
 For I ween at my brother's bidding mine uncle Gamuret won
 Less welcome from Queen Anflisé than the welcome *I* gave to thee,
 An our tending were weighed together methinks hers would lighter be.
 Nor know I, Sir Knight, whence thou comest, nor e'en what shall be thy name,
 That, after such short approving, thou shouldst to my love lay claim!'
 Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'Then know here assuredly
 O! queen, of my father's sister the brother's son am I;
 Wilt thou give me sweet love's rewarding, for my birth shalt thou not delay,
 Hand in hand, and to equal measure, it paceth with thine alway!'
 The maiden who filled the wine-cup she had passed from out the hall,
 And the women who sat beside them must now to their mind recall
 The task that elsewhere did wait them; nor longer the knight stood there
 Who erst to the queen had brought him—As Gawain was now aware
 That no man was here beside them, he thought how a mighty bird
 Is oft trapped by a little falcon—nor further he spake a word,
 But he passed his arm around her beneath her mantle's fold,
 And love laid such stress upon them, the maid and the hero bold,
 That belike a thing had chanced there, an no eye had been there to see,
 Of one mind were the twain—yet heart-sorrow drew near to them speedily.
 For straight stepped within the doorway an old and grey-haired knight,

And loudly he called on Gawain, and shouted a shout of might,
For well did he know the hero, and fiercely his cry did ring,
'Alas! alas! woe upon us, since the hand that hath slain our king
Is fain now to force his daughter!' At the sound of his battle-cry
The folk that within the castle abode to the hall did hie,
So it fell out—Then quoth Sir Gawain to the queen, 'Now, Lady mine,
Say thou how we best may ward us 'gainst this wrathful folk of thine,
For sure they will come against us—An I had but my sword at hand!'
Then out spake the gentle maiden, 'Their might shall we best withstand
An we to yon tower betake us that riseth my bower beside,
Perchance they will then bethink them, and the storm shall we override.'
Here a knight, and there a merchant, already the maid must hear,
With the cry of the angry townsfolk, as the twain to the tower drew near;
And sore was her friend beset there, tho' she prayed them from strife to cease,
So loud rose the angry tumult none hearkened her words of peace.
'Gainst the portal the foe pressed onward, Gawain stood within the door,
And held off the angry rabble; an iron bolt he tore
From its fastenings wherewith to arm him, and before his strong right hand
Full oft fled his evil neighbours, they durst not his blows withstand.
While the queen, with flying footsteps, hither and thither sought
To find, perchance, some weapon 'gainst the foe that so fiercely fought.
At length did she chance on some chess-men, and a chess-board, wide and fair,
That hung by a ring of iron; to Gawain she brought it there,
As a shield four-square it served him; yea, many a game was played
On that board ere 'twas hewn in battle—Now hear of the royal maid;
Were it king, or queen, or castle, she hurled them against the foe,
Heavy and large the chess-men, and in sooth I would have ye know
They who by her shaft were stricken must ever a fall abide.
Right bravely the queen so gracious now fought by her hero's side,
And she bare herself so knightly, that never the Burger maids
Of Tollenstein at Shrove-tide such dauntless skill displayed.
And yet they but fight for folly, and weary themselves for naught—
An a woman bear trace of battle, on her womanhood shame is brought,
(For I know what befits a woman,) unless love shall have bid her fight
To prove her faith—Now faithful and true was that lady bright,
As Schamfanzon might bear witness—Yet, tho' high of heart was she,
Many tears that conflict cost her; for in sooth shall it ever be
That Love is brave as steadfast, yet tender and true of heart—
Would ye know how in such fierce conflict Sir Gawain would bear his part?
When the strife but leisure gave him to gaze on the maid aright,
Her lips so red and glowing, her eyes so soft and bright—
More slender was she and shapely than ever a lowland hare
That ye truss on the spit, so graceful her limbs, and her form so fair;
Full well might her charms awaken desire in the heart of man.
And smaller, I ween, the maiden, where her golden girdle ran
Around her waist, than ants are, and their slender shape ye know—
The sight wrought in Gawain courage his foemen to overthrow,
For she shared his need; his chastising none other than death should be,
And help was there none—Then his anger flamed high and wroth was he
As he looked on that gentle maiden, and no fear was his but hate,
And sorely his foemen rued it who met at his hand their fate.
Came King Vergulacht, and he saw well how his folk 'gainst Gawain did fight;
Nor do I in this deceive ye, nor can I account him right
That not as a host he bare him, when he saw his gallant guest
Thus stand, as one man against many—But straight thro' the throng he pressed,

In such wise, I must mourn for Gandein, the monarch of Anjou fair,
 That his daughter, so true a lady, so faithless a son must bear.
 From the strife his folk he called not, short space must they stay their hand
 While the king would don his armour, he lusted to lead the band.
 Too mighty the force for Gawain, nor I ween shall ye count it shame
 That he closed the door upon them—Then in wrath and haste there came
 The knight who to battle bade him 'fore Arthur at Plimizöl
 But short time back—They called him the Landgrave Kingrimursel,
 And sore did Gawain's need vex him, he wrung his hands amain,
 For in sooth had he pledged his honour his foe should in peace remain
 Till *one* man alone o'ercame him—Old and young from the tower he drave,
 Yet the portal would they force open, as their king commandment gave.
 Then the Landgrave he cried on Gawain, 'Sir Knight, I would in to thee
 As a friend, that this bitter conflict I may share, if it so must be,
 For then must my monarch slay me, or leave thee in life to-day.'
 Peace Gawain would swear unto him, and he made to the tower his way—
 Then doubtful, the foemen thronging, their hand for a space must hold,
 For their Burg-grave he was, and his bidding had they hearkened both young and old.
 Then, as ceased the noise of battle, thro' the doorway he sprang, Gawain,
 And the Landgrave, he stood beside him, swift and bold were those heroes twain.
 Quoth King Vergulacht, 'Why tarry? Why stand we here as on guard,
 When of foemen but *two* shall dare us, and none other the tower gates ward?
 Much my cousin doth take upon him, when he dareth to shield my foe,
 Yea, *himself* should wreak vengeance on him, if his faith he were fain to show!'
 Of true heart then they chose a true man, and unto the king he spake,
 'Now, Sire, upon our Landgrave no vengeance we think to take,
 Nor shall harm at *our* hand befall him—May God so turn thy mind
 That, instead of shaming, honour thou shalt from this venture find.
 For shame shall it bring upon thee, and an ending to thy fair fame,
 If he who as host doth hail thee shall here at thine hand be slain.
 And thy kinsman is he, this other who hath brought him into this land;
 So, lest cursing and shame be thy portion, we pray thee to stay thine hand,
 And grant thou a truce thro' the daylight, and the fleeting hours of night,
 Then bethink thee for shame or honour, and do as shall seem thee right!'
 'And our queen who hath ne'er known falsehood, thy sister, Antikonie,
 See there as she standeth by him and weepeth full bitterly.
 Canst thou see such sight without rueing, since one mother bare ye both?
 And bethink thee, sire, thou art wise else, thou didst send him, nothing loth,
 Alone to this gentle maiden, nor further a guardian gave;
 For *her* sake it were well to spare him!' Then the king bade those warriors brave
 To call a truce—He'd bethink him how vengeance he best might take
 For his father's death—Yet all guiltless Gawain, for another's sake,
 Must he bear the shame; with a lance-thrust by Ekunât was he slain
 As to Barbigöl Prince Iofreit, a prisoner, he would have ta'en,
 Who had ridden erewhile with Gawain—In such wise the chance befell
 That they deemed that *Gawain* had slain him—So men do the venture tell.
 And scarce was the truce bespoken ere of men was the field bereft,
 Each betook him unto his lodging, nor one on the ground was left.
 Then the queen threw her arms around him, and with many a kiss so sweet
 She gave to her gallant cousin such rewarding as seemed her meet,
 Since so bravely he stood by Gawain, and sheltered the twain from wrong,
 And she spake, 'Now art thou my cousin, nor unfaith shall to thee belong.'
 Now hearken and I will read ye that word which I spake of late,
 How a true heart sore was darkened—I ween 'twas an evil fate
 That led Vergulacht to Schamfanzon; such deed he ne'er did learn

From sire or aye from mother, with shame did the young knight burn,
 And torment sore and suffering his better self must know
 As his sister 'gan upbraid him, small mercy the maid would show.
 And thus spake the noble maiden, 'Now had it but been God's will,
 That I, a man born, might sword bear, and knightly tasks fulfil,
 To strive with me hadst thou come here, methinks thou hadst come too late,—
 But now am I all defenceless, a maiden, and no man's mate.
 And yet a shield I carry, and fair its device shall be,
 And honoured of all—Its blazon would I read here, Sir King, to thee,
 That thou henceforth mayst know it—Pure heart and upright mind,
 That true man beneath its cover a shelter may ever find.
 And that, o'er the gallant hero whom thou sentest unto my care,
 Did I hold, and 'gainst thee, his foeman, I did, as beseemed me, bear,
 For none other armour had I—And if thou repent the ill
 Thou hast done to thy guest, me, thy sister, hast thou wronged more deeply still;
 For this is the right of woman, so ever 'twas told to me,
 That if ever unto the shelter of a maiden a knight shall flee,
 Then they who as foemen follow shall straightway leave their chase—
 In such wise they ever bear them who would not their shield disgrace—
 Now, Sir Vergulacht, that thy guest fled to *me* as his hope of life,
 Hath loaded with shame thine honour, since thou aided, nor checked, the strife!
 Then Kingrimursel quoth sternly, 'Yea, Sire, 'twas at *thy* command,
 That on Plimizöl's plain I bade him, Sir Gawain, to seek this land.
 On thy royal word safe conduct I sware him, that should he ride
 Hither we twain were pledged him no evil should here betide,
 Save but from *one* foeman only—Now, Sire, thou hast here done ill
 In that, spite of thine oath so knightly, thy word thou didst not fulfil.
 And here shall my fellows hearing give judgment betwixt us twain,
 If thus thou wrongest *princes*, what as *king* mayst thou hope to gain
 From us of faith and honour?—If honoured thou fain wouldst be,
 Then, courteous, make confession that near of kin are we;
 True cousin am I, no bastard, and e'en if such chance had been,
 Even then, in this thy dealing, thou hadst done me a wrong, I ween!
 A knight am I in whom no man hath found a taint of shame,
 And I think me that free from falsehood, yea, to death will I guard my fame,
 For in God have I ever trusted, and, methinks, He holds not in store
 Such fate for the days of the future as I knew not in days of yore.
 Yet they who shall hear the story, how the nephew of Arthur rode
 To Schamfanzon 'neath my safe-conduct, where'er shall be his abode—
 An he come from the land of the Breton, or from France, or from Provence fair,
 Burgundian he, or Gallician, or the arms of Punturtois bear—
 When he hear of the grief of Gawain then *my* fame shall be swiftly sped,
 And shame be my meed for the danger that threatened that knightly head.
 At the tale of this strife shall my glory wax narrow, and blame grow wide;
 And, as joy in the past dwelt with me, so henceforward shall shame abide.'
 As he made an end of speaking stood a vassal the king before,
 And, as Kiot himself hath told us, Liddamus was the name he bore.
 And I speak here of Kiot the singer, and so sweet was I ween his song
 That none wax of the hearing weary, tho' the days of their life be long.
 And I rede ye to wit that Kiot of old was a Provençal,
 Who found writ in a book of the heathen this story of Parzival.
 And in French again he sang it, and I, if no wit shall fail,
 Would fain in his footsteps follow, and in German would tell the tale.
 Quoth the Prince Liddamus in his anger, 'Now say, what doth he do here
 In the house of my lord, who his father hath slain, and hath brought anear

The brand of shame? My king's courage is known thro' many a land,
 'Twould better beseem his honour to avenge him with his own hand;
 One death for the other payeth—and the need waxeth here as there.'
 And Gawain he stood in sore peril, and fear for his life must bear.
 Quoth Kingrimursel, 'Who to threaten is swift, he as swift should be
 To mingle in strife, yet but lightly thy foeman he holdeth thee!
 An wide were the field or narrow, yet Sir Liddamus, I know well
 This man were safe from thine onslaught e'en tho' shame at his hand befell,
 For ne'er wouldst thou dare to avenge it, who yet dost so loudly boast—
 And swifter were we to hearken if ever in battle host
 We had seen thee ride the foremost! But strife ever wrought thee pain,
 And afar from the field of battle to linger thou aye wast fain.
 Yea, *more* hast thou learnt—The beginning of strife didst thou ever see,
 Then hence wouldst thou fly as swiftly as a maiden is wont to flee.
 And the prince who thy counsel hearkens, and doeth as thou shalt say,
 Shall find that the crown he weareth but loosely shall sit away!'
 'And fain, in a joust so knightly, were I to have faced Gawain,
 Nor feared me aught, for such combat had we sworn fast betwixt us twain.
 And here had we fought, as fitting, 'neath the eye of the king my lord,
 And wroth am I now, for dearer, methought, had he held his word!
 Now swear thou to me, Sir Gawain, when a year from this day be past,
 To meet me again in combat—If thou 'scape my lord's wrath at last,
 And thy life for a prey he leave thee, yet we twain must fight our fight.
 At Plimizöl first I bade thee; at Barbigöl, if it seem thee right,
 Before Meljanz, the youthful monarch, the strife shall methinks be fought;
 And around my heart till the day come shall sorrow's wreath be wrought,
 And gladly I'll hail that dawning, and face thee, thou hero bold,
 Tho' the guerdon be but of sorrow, that shall there by thine hand be told.'
 So there, as the Landgrave bade him, the hero Gawain swore,
 And his oath, and his pledge so knightly, he plighted as erst of yore.
 But Duke Liddamus, he bethought him of words that he fain would say,
 And with cunning skill and wisdom his speech did he weave that day.
 Thus he spake for all men to hear him, for the time of speech was come,
 'Now if strife ever call upon me, if the battle be lost or won,
 If I fight as beseems a hero, or fly as a coward flies,
 If the meed of my warlike bearing be honour in all men's eyes,
 Then reward me I pray, Sir Landgrave, with rewarding as I shall win;
 But if honour or praise be withholden I count it not me for sin!'
 Nor here did his speech find ending. 'If *Turnus* thou fain wouldst be,
 Then good, thou shalt find me *Tranzas*; thou mayst well wreak thy will on me,
 If so be thou hast aught against me, but 'tis *thou* who dost boast too loud,
 Yea, e'en an thou wert the highest of my peers, these princes proud;
 For Prince am I too, and Landgrave, and I have in Galicia's land
 Many Burgs so fair and stately that e'en far as Vedrun stand.
 And tho' thou and this Breton stranger were minded to work me ill,
 Yet not even a fowl for thy threatening would fly, but abide thee still!'
 'He came from the land of the Breton whom thou hither for strife didst hale.
 Take *thou* vengeance for king and kinsman, if such vengeance may aught avail;
 With *him*, not with *me*, thy quarrel, avenge thou thine uncle's life
 On him who of life hath robbed him, it toucheth me not, this strife,
 For I wot well in naught I wronged him, and none for such wrong makes moan.
 What need to bewail thine uncle? His son sitteth on his throne,
 And I ask for no higher ruler, since Fleurdamur, the queen,
 Was his mother, his sire Kingrisein, and his grandsire Gandein hath been.
 And still in my mind it dwelleth how Galoes and Gamuret,

Those heroes twain, were his uncles, nor lie I, nor truth forget.
 And I think me that in all honour my castles and lands so wide
 I may take from his hand, with their banners, and serve him whate'er betide!
 'Let him fight who hath lust for fighting, for weary of strife am I,
 Tho' I know well who fame in battle doth win, for his victory
 Hath reward from the lips of women, yet for never a maiden's sake
 Will I evil entreat this body, or bid it such ill-road take.
 Nay, why should I be a Wolfhart? Since barred is the battle way,
 And no lust of strife hath beguiled me that I know not the thing I say.
 If thou shouldst for aye despise me, yet Rumolt I'll take as guide,
 Who gave counsel unto King Gunther, ere yet to the Huns he hied.
 For he bade him in Worms abide still, where was plenty and e'en to spare,
 And content his soul with the flesh-pots and the riches of Rhineland fare!
 But ready of wit was the Landgrave, and he spake, 'Yea, the tale be told
 E'en to day, and no man shall marvel, for we know well thy ways of old.
 Thou wouldst urge me to strife, yet thy counsel is e'en what a cook once gave
 To the Nibelung lord, little recked he such counsel, the hero brave.
 For he and his, little doubting, went boldly to meet their fate,
 And avenged was the death of Siegfried, and sated was Kriemhild's hate!
 And Sir Gawain, I ween, must give me my death, or himself must feel
 The weight of my bitter vengeance as we battle for woe or weal.'
 'Thou dost well,' Liddamus made answer, 'yet I think me of treasure fair,
 All that Arthur might hold, or India, if one such to my feet should bear,
 And say 'twas mine own, he might have it ere I fought e'en for such a prize.
 An thou wilt, win thee fame and honour, I, I think me, am all too wise.
 God knoweth, no Segramor am I, whom men must with fetters bind
 So keenly for strife he lusted, far other was aye my mind.
 Yet mine be my monarch's favour, for Sibeck ne'er drew a sword,
 But ever he fled with the flying, yet men hearkened well his word;
 And many for counsel prayed him, and great gifts and lands enow
 The hand of Ermenrich gave him, tho' no helmet e'er felt his blow.
 And Sir Kingrimursel, I rede thee, thou shalt mark me with never a scar!
 Then out spake King Vergulacht sternly, as he ended their wordy war:
 'Peace, peace, nor so loudly wrangle, Sir Knights, all too bold are ye,
 For too near is your monarch's presence, and of speech are ye both too free;
 And that thus ye should strive before me, tho' your strife be of *word*, not *deed*,
 Ill beseemeth both king and vassal, so hearken my word, and heed.'
 This befell in the hall of the palace, 'neath the eyes of his sister fair,
 And Gawain stood beside the maiden, and heroes and knights were there.
 Quoth the king to his gentle sister, 'Now take thou with thee thy guest
 And the Landgrave, while I bethink me the word that shall 'seem me best.
 And all ye who wish well unto me, shall follow and give me rede.'
 Quoth the maid, 'Of good faith seek counsel, for better 'twill serve thy need!'
 Gat the king to his council-chamber; the king's daughter had comrades three,
 Cousin, and guest, and beside them black care bare them company.
 Gawain, as right well beseemed her, by the hand to her bower she led.
 And she quoth, 'Now shall all lands rue it if here thou shalt be ill-spel'
 And the son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, with the maiden went hand in hand,
 And none thought them shame, for so gracious was the custom of that fair land.
 So passed they unto her chamber, the queen and those heroes twain,
 And that none 'gainst her will should enter was the care of her chamberlain.
 Only her bower maidens as befitted them there might be,
 And the queen, in all love and honour, her guest tended royally.
 And the Landgrave in naught gainsaid her, for belike did he bear a part
 In the fear for her guest's well-doing that lay dark on the maiden's heart.

So the twain with the queen abode there till the strife of the day was o'er,
 And the night and the hour of feasting had come in their course once more.
 Then the slender maidens bare them sweet drinks, and the wine so red,
 And with fish and fowl in plenty, I ween, was the table spread.
 Fair and white was the bread to look on, and the Landgrave and Knight Gawain,
 Who had passed thro' such deadly peril, to taste of the food were fain.
 And each as the queen might bid him ate that which should please him best,
 And no lack did they find, for right queenly the maid did entreat her guest,
 And vainly the heroes prayed her to cease from her kindly care.
 Of the many who knelt before them no maid but was young and fair;
 Yea, fair with the opening beauty of the rose that is yet unblown,
 And soft lay their locks as the feathers of a falcon the knight hath flown.
 Now list, ere they close the council, to the rede they would rede the king
 And wise were the men who, wisely, good counsel in need should bring;
 And each spake as his mind should bid him, and that which his heart deemed best,
 And they turned the thing hither and thither, till the king thus his speech address:
 And he spake, 'One of late fought with me, as on venture bent I rode
 In the wood Læhtamreis—too proudly, perchance, I my steed bestrode,
 For a knight, who o'er great my fame deemed, in joust smote me such a blow
 That, behind my gallant charger, on the greensward he laid me low.
 And this oath must I swear unto him, in search of the Grail to ride,
 And my knightly pledge I gave him, were it other, I there had died.
 Now give me, I pray, your counsel, for 'gainst death was no other shield
 But to swear as my victor bade me, and, as knight, to a knight to yield!'
 'Yea, mighty and strong that hero,—nor sware I that oath alone,
 But he bade me, as true man truly, when a year should have come and gone,
 And the Grail I still were seeking, to ride unto Pelrapär
 To the queen who the crown there weareth, the child of King Tampentäre.
 And there, as I looked upon her, I should yield me unto her grace;
 And from him should I bear this message in the day that I sought her face.
 He would say, "An she thought upon him 'twas his joy and his labour's meed,
 His hand from the King Klamidé aforetime her land had freed."
 Then the speech to the end they hearkened; and Liddamus spake this word,
 'Give me leave to speak, ye shall follow, Sir Knights, when my rede is heard,
 For the oath that perforce thou swarest, its fulfiller shall be Gawain,
 And he, captive, his wings shall flutter in the snare wherein *thou* wast ta'en.
 For here, where we stand to hearken, shall he swear us the Grail to win,
 And then of free will let him ride hence; for I deem men would count it sin
 Were he slain in thine house—Nay, me-seemeth 'twere better to let him live,
 For but ill would it please thy sister an thou didst not her knight forgive!
 Sore stress at our hands hath he suffered, and he now to his death shall ride;
 For far as the far sea's water shall circle the earth so wide
 There standeth no Burg so mighty as Monsalväscher, its towers shall fear
 No foeman, and strait the pathway that wendeth its walls anear,
 And sore dangers that road encompass—Let him slumber in peace this night,
 And the word that we deem the wisest shall be told him with morning light!'
 Right well did the counsel please them, and ended, I ween, the strife,
 And Gawain, so the venture telleth, thus won at their hands his life.
 So they tended the dauntless hero right well thro' the hours of night;
 From the Mass came the folk on the morrow when the noontide hour waxed bright,
 And the hall was thronged and crowded with townsfolk and warriors good,
 When before the king, as they counselled, his foeman, Sir Gawain, stood.
 To naught other would he compel him than to that which ye late did hear.
 Now see ye the gentle maiden as she drew with her knight anear,
 And her uncle's son came with her, and many a hero brave

Of the king's men were fain to follow, and thus fair escort gave.
Then the queen led Gawain to her brother with slender hand and white,
And a chaplet of fair flowers woven she bare on her locks of light,
Fair the flowers, yet the maid was fairer, and no blossom around her head
But waxed pale and dim, if 'twas mated with her lips of glowing red.
And he whom of true heart gently she kissed, as beseemed a maid,
Such lances for her had broken as had wasted a woodland shade.
Now hearken to me and heed me, as with gracious words I'd greet
Antikonie, free from falsehood, a maiden pure and sweet.
In such wise did she ever bear her that never a doubting word,
Were one fain to sing her praises, from the lips of men was heard;
For no heart but wished her gladness, and no mouth but spake her free
From all thought of guile—Far-reaching, as a falcon's eye can see,
Shone the light of her gracious presence, as the light of a balsam rare
That burneth, and sheddeth perfume, and sweeteneth the scented air.
And her will was ever gracious, as the will of a maid should be,
And she spake to her royal brother of a true heart right maidenly:
'I bring here to thee, my brother, the guest thou didst bid me tend,
And I would thou shouldst well entreat him, as befitting my knight and friend—
For better shall that become thee, to bear thee as brother true,
Than to feel the world's hate, or to teach me to hate thee, who hate ne'er knew.'
Quoth the king, 'Nay then, my sister, an I may, so stands my will,
Thou shalt give me here thy counsel, for I think me I did but ill,
And stained thereby mine honour, and dimmed my knightly fame;
And I deem me but little worthy that thou shouldst me as brother claim.
E'en if all lands should do my bidding at thy prayer would I yield them all,
Lest that sorrow of sorrows greatest, thine hatred, on me should fall!
And honour and joy were ended an I said to thy pleading, Nay—
Sir Gawain, I here entreat thee, since for fame thou didst ride this way,
An thou knightly fame wouldst honour, so help me, that I may win
Anew from my sister favour, and forgiveness for this my sin.
Far liefer were I to pardon the wrong thou hast done to me
Than to lose her, my sweetest sister—Now list what thy task shall be,
Do thou swear to me here that truly thou wilt strive, as I erst was fain
To strive, for the Grail's fair kingdom, and the honour thou there shalt gain.'
In such wise the strife was ended, Sir Gawain far hence must ride,
And with sword and spear do battle, and woe for the Grail abide.
And the Landgrave forgave his monarch the wrong that he did his word
When he brake his pledge unto Gawain—and no prince of the land but heard.
Then their swords they ungirt, and they hung them in their place on the castle wall—
And the squires of Gawain came swiftly, and, joyful, he hailed them all,
For not one in strife was wounded—for a man of the Burger folk,
Ere the battle waxed hot, had claimed them, and wise were the words he spoke,
And their peace he prayed from the foemen, and he held them awhile in ward,
Were they French, or from land of the Breton, till again to their rightful lord
He might send them in peace—Some were children, and some were lads strong and young—
And glad were their hearts when they saw him, and awhile on his neck they hung,
And weeping they kissed Sir Gawain, yet no sorrow I ween was there,
But from joy sprang the crystal tear-drops that ran o'er their faces fair.
And one came from the land of Cornwall, Count Laiz he, and Tinal's son;
And a noble lad was with him whose father his death had won
At Schoie-de-la-Kurt, Gandelus, the son, and Gurgzei, the sire—
(Thro' that venture full many a maiden must weep for her heart's desire)
And his aunt was the maid Liassé, and fair was the lad of face
And of feature, for Love had touched them, and had wrought them with hand of grace,

And fain were all men to see him—Six were there those twain beside,
 Eight lads, all of noble bearing and birth, with Gawain did ride.
 And as kinsmen right well they loved him, and they served him for payment fair;
 What payment gave he? Meed of honour their guerdon, and tender care!
 Then Gawain quoth unto the children, 'Tis well, for I now have seen,
 Fair kinsmen, that ye had mourned me, if slain I perchance had been,
 (And well might he see their sorrow, for as yet they mourned full sore,)
 Where were ye in hour of battle? Much sorrow for ye I bore.'
 Then they answered, and none spake falsely, 'As thou sat'st in the high hall place
 A hawk flew astray, and we ran thence, and joined for awhile the chase.'
 Then all they who sat or stood there, nor ceased for awhile their gaze,
 Saw well that Gawain was a true knight, and a man whom all men might praise;
 Then the king gave the leave he prayed for, and he spake unto all farewell,
 Save the queen alone, and the Landgrave, he whom men called Kingrimursel.
 For the queen took the twain, and the children who followed as Gawain's squires,
 And she led them where gentle maidens should serve as she should require,
 And in peace, as became fair maidens, each maid did her lady's will,
 And fair were the hands and gracious that did gracious tasks fulfil.
 Straightway when the meal was ended Gawain from the feast uprose,
 Thus Kiot hath told the story—and as blossom from root up-grows,
 So afresh from a true heart's true faith did sorrow spring forth amain—
 Quoth the hero unto the maiden, 'Now, Lady, an God be fain
 To leave to me life and wisdom, wherever my way I take
 True service, true knight befitting, will I do for thy gentle sake.
 The rede did I hear and hearken that spake thee of falsehood free,
 And thy fame o'er the fame of all maidens shall high as the heavens be.
 And Heaven Itself shall bless thee, and thy gifts all be gifts of God!
 Now, Lady, thy leave I crave here, since 'tis time on my way I rode.
 Give me leave, then, and let me ride hence, for I ween for the future days
 Shalt thou be thine own best defender, and thy virtue shall crown thy praise!'
 Then sorrow of heart was her portion that the knight thus her side must leave,
 Sore she wept, and her gentle maidens awhile with her grief must grieve.
 And the queen she spake out freely, 'An more I had done for thee,
 Then my joy had o'ercome my sorrow, yet better it might not be;
 Little peace for thee here might blossom—but, believe me, be ill thy share,
 Or should deeds of knighthood lead thee where sorrow thou needs must bear,
 Then, Sir Gawain, my heart findeth portion in thy lot, be it loss or gain!'
 On his mouth, with her red lips glowing, the maiden she kissed Gawain.
 Then joy fled afar from the hero, and sorrow hath pierced his heart,
 Too early the twain they deemed it, from each other for aye to part.
 Meantime had his squires bethought them, and his steed to the palace brought,
 Where the boughs of a mighty linden might shadow the outer court;
 And the Landgrave's folk they sought him, and together they took their way
 Without the walls; ere they parted this grace would Sir Gawain pray,
 Since his squires might no more fare with him, that the Landgrave with them in ward
 Should ride forthwith unto Beaurisch, 'There Scherules the Burg doth guard,
 Thou shalt pray him that these fair children to Dianasdron he bring
 Where many a Breton dwelleth, and shall yield them unto the king
 Or to Guinevere, his Lady'—So sware him Kingrimursel,
 And, with kindly words and courteous, to Sir Gawain he bade 'Farewell.'
 Short the space ere both steed and rider were clad in their mail of might,
 Kinsmen and squires, he kissed them, and alone rode that gallant knight,
 For, as this his oath had bade him, to the Grail must his pathway wend,
 And many a pain and peril must he know ere his task should end.

BOOK IX TREVREZENT

'Ope the portal!' 'To whom? Who art thou?' 'In thine heart would I find a place!'
 'Nay! if such be thy prayer, methinketh, too narrow shall be the space!'
 'What of that? If it do but hold me, none too close shall my presence be,
 Nor shalt thou bewail my coming, such marvels I'll tell to thee!'
 Is it thou, then, O Dame Adventure? Ah! tell me of Parzival,
 What doeth he now my hero? whom Kondrie, to find the Grail
 Hath driven, with words sharp-pointed, and sore wept the maidens fair
 That the path of his far wayfarings the knight from their side must bear.
 So he passed from the court of King Arthur, where shall he abide to-day?
 Ah! hasten the tale to tell us, where now shall his footsteps stray?
 Say, if fame to himself he winneth, or be ever of joy bereft,
 Shall his honour as fair and spotless as of old so to-day be left?
 His renown is it broad as aforetime, or waxeth it small and thin?
 Ah! tell us, nor stay the story, of the deeds that his hand shall win.
 Hath he seen once again Monsalväs, and Anfortas, the mournful king,
 Whose heart was with sorrow laden? Of thy pity swift comfort bring,
 And say if his woe be ended—Speak, speak for we tidings pray
 Of him whom alike we serve here, dwells Parzival there to-day?
 Declare unto me his doings, how fares it with Gamuret's son,
 And the child of fair Herzeleide, is the tale of his wanderings done?
 Since he rode from the court of King Arthur has joy been his lot, or woe?
 He hath striven, but rides he ever thro' the wide world nor rest doth know?
 Or loveth he now, outwearied, to linger o'er-long at ease?
 I were fain to know all his doings, so speak thou, as thou shalt please!
 And this hath the venture told me—He hath ridden many a land,
 And hath sailèd many a water; and ever, before his hand,
 Were he man of the land or kinsman who would joust with him, he fell,
 Nor abode his mighty onslaught, and all men of his praises tell.
 And ever when in the balance the fame of his foe must lie,
 'Twas outweighed by his fame, and his glory uprose to the stars on high,
 And all others paled before it—In many a mighty strife
 With sword and lance was he victor, and guarded full well his life.
 And they who would fame win from him, for such thinking they paid full dear—
 The sword that Anfortas gave him, as ye once in this tale did hear,
 Sprang asunder onewhile, yet 'twas welded afresh in the mystic spring
 By Karnant, and much fame and honour the blade to its lord did bring!
 Who believeth me not, he sinneth, for now doth the venture tell
 How adown a woodland pathway, on his way rode Sir Parzival,
 (But the hour of his riding I wot not, if in waxing or waning light,)
 When a hermitage, newly builded, uprose to his wondering sight,
 And a stream flowed swift beneath it, for 'twas built o'er the brooklet's wave
 Then in search of some worthy venture to its door rode the hero brave,
 Nor knew that of grace 'twas the portal, and his footsteps of God were led.
 But the dweller therein was a maiden, and the days of her joy were sped,
 For the love of God had she offered her youth, and the joys of earth,
 And the root of her old-time sorrow brought ever fresh grief to birth.
 For he found here Schionatulander, and Siguné, his faithful love,
 Dead and buried he lay, the hero, and the maid wept his tomb above.
 Tho' but seldom Siguné the Duchess might hearken the Holy Mass,
 All her life was a prayer, in God's service her nights as her days she'd pass.
 And her lips, erst so red and glowing, had faded as life-joys fade,
 And alone would she mourn such sorrow as never had mourned a maid.
 Thus denial of love's fulfilling made Love, with her love, to die,

And dead, as she living loved him, did she cherish him tenderly.
 And in sooth had she once his wife been, then ne'er had Lunete braved
 Her wrath, and had given such counsel, as she once to her lady gave.
 And today may we look upon women, who never a willing ear
 Had turned to Lunete, and such wisdom but little had brooked to hear.
 For this do I know, that a woman who, for love of her lord alone,
 And thro' virtue of gentle breeding, doth never strange service own,
 But aye, while her husband liveth, shall be to him wife as true,
 Heaven giveth in her such blessing as bloometh for ever new!
 And never shall prayer or fasting robe her with a robe as fair!
 And I, if the time were fitting, this word naught but truth would swear.
 Be he dead, she may do as best please her, but if faithful she still abide,
 Then far fairer such faith than the circlet she beareth at feasting tide!
 Shall I joy compare with the sorrow that her faith to Siguné brought?
 Nay, 'twere better I speak not of it—O'er rough stones, and a road unwrought
 Rode Parzival to the window (he deemed well he rode too near).
 He would ask of the woodland pathway, and the goal of its windings hear.
 And he thought him, perchance, the hermit might tell of the unknown way,
 'Doth one dwell here?' the voice of a maiden it was that made answer, 'Yea!'
 As he knew 'twas the voice of a woman, swift turned he his steed aside
 On the greensward beside the pathway, for he deemed he too near did ride,
 And sooner had he dismounted had he known that a maiden dwelt
 Within such a lowly dwelling, and shame, as was meet, he felt.
 Then his horse and his shield, all splintered, he bound to a fallen tree,
 And he loosed his sword from beside him, for a courteous knight was he.
 Then he stepped him unto the window, and asked of the place and road,
 And the cell of all joy was empty, and bare, as 'seemed grief's abode.
 He spake, would she come to the window? and the maiden from prayer arose,
 She was tall as a virgin lily, and pale as a faded rose,
 And he deemed not as yet that he knew her—A shirt woven rough of hair,
 Next her skin, 'neath a flowing garment of grey, did the maiden wear,
 And sorrow was her heart's treasure, and fallen her courage high,
 And the guerdon she won for her service must be paid her in many a sigh!
 Then the maiden she stepped to the window and the knight did she courteous greet,
 In her hand did she hold her psalter, and her voice it was low and sweet.
 And Parzival saw on her white hand the gleam of a ring of gold,
 For truly she bare the token she won from true love of old.
 And the stone set within the circlet was a garnet, whose slumbering light
 Flashed red mid the dusky shadows, as mid ashes the sparks glow bright.
 And the band that her head encircled was black as a mourning band—
 Then she spake, 'Sir Knight, 'neath the window a bench shalt thou see to stand,
 Thou canst sit there, an it so please thee, and thy journey will brook delay,
 God reward thee for this thy greeting Who hath led thee to me this day!'
 Then the hero did as she bade him, and he sat 'neath the window small,
 And he prayed her, 'Sit thou within there!' 'Nay! ne'er did such chance befall
 That here by a man I sat me!' Then he asked her, what did she here?
 That, so far from the home of men-folk, thou dost dwell in this desert drear
 Seemeth me all too great a wonder, say, Lady, how shalt thou live,
 Since no man abideth by thee who succour or food can give?'
 Then she quoth, 'Tis the Grail that doth feed me, and It feedeth me well I ween,
 From Its marvels the sorceress Kondrie, (of her own will the task hath been,)
 Doth bring me each Sabbath vigil what serveth me for the week.'
 A little space she kept silence, then further the maid did speak:
 'An it otherwise were with me as I would, I need little care
 For the food, since the Grail doth feed me I never too ill shall fare!'

But he deemed that she lied unto him, and with false words would speak him
fair, And, mocking, he spake, 'Now, who gave thee that ring which I see thee wear?
For ever 'twas told unto me that hermit, or man, or maid,
Must forswear all love!'—'Now I think me, if in truth thou these words hast said,
For false maiden thou sure dost hold me! Yet if falsehood I ever learn,
And thou shalt be near to witness, 'twere time *then* with wrath to burn!
God knoweth, ill ways I hated, and falsehood I never knew;
This troth plight that here thou seest I had from a lover true,
Tho' never was love's fulfilment our portion while he might live,
'Twas the heart of maiden bade me the love of a maiden give.
And he lieth in death beside me, and his token I ever wear
Since the day that Duke Orilus slew him—and grief for his sake I bear—'
'And true love will I truly give him, thro' my sorrow-laden days,
Such love as I sware unto him, when he, whom, all knights must praise,
With sword, and shield, and helmet, and prowess of knightly deed
Sought my love, and in true love's service won death for his glory's meed!
Yet tho' ever a spotless maiden, my husband he, in God's sight,
Shall be, and if thoughts God counteth as deeds then is woven aright
The bond that shall ever bind us, true husband and wife as true,
For his death wrought my life such sorrow as waxeth for ever new.
And this ring shall, I ween, be my witness when I stand in the sight of God
Of a marriage vow and the tear-drops that bedew it are tears of blood.'
'Yea, 'tis I indeed, and none other, and the hero who here doth lie
Is my knight, Schionatulander, and the maid of his love am I!'
Then he knew 'twas the maid Siguné, and her sorrow it wrought him pain,
And he lifted his helmet's visor ere he spake to the maid again.
And she saw his head uncovered, and she saw his face gleam white
Thro' the rust of the iron harness, and she spake to the gallant knight:
'Is it thou, Parzival, my kinsman? Dost thou seek for the Grail to-day?
Or its mighty power hast thou proven? Say, whither dost wend thy way?'
Then he spake to the noble maiden, 'Alas! for my joy is fled,
And the Grail hath but wrought me sorrow, and mischance in fair fortune's stead.
For the land that as king had crowned me must I leave, and yet more, I ween,
The fairest of wives, and the sweetest, that ever a man hath seen.
For no lovelier form I think me on earth of mankind was born,
And I yearn for her tender greeting, and full sore for her love I mourn!
And yet know I a deeper sorrow and I strive for a higher prize,
For the day when the Burg of Monsalväsche, and the Grail shall rejoice my eyes!
Now, Siguné, dear my cousin, thou wast all too wroth with me,
For heavy indeed my sorrow, yet thou fain wouldst my foeman be!'
And she quoth, 'From henceforth, my cousin, mine anger will I forswear,
For too much of thy joy lieth forfeit since the question thou didst forbear!
And I would not too sorely grieve thee—Alas I that thou didst withhold
The word that had brought thee honour, and the tale of his griefs had told
Who sat there as thine host beside thee—nor thine host alone was he,
Anfortas, for joy and blessing his presence had brought to thee!
And thy question great bliss had brought thee, and thy silence had wrought thee woe,
And thy spirit shall fail, and heart-sorrow as thy comrade thou well shalt know.
And yet had it been far from thee, nor, a stranger, had sought thy side,
Hadst thou asked of that Burg the marvels, and what ill did its host betide!'
'Yea, I did there as one who wrongeth himself; yet my cousin dear
I prithee here give me counsel, since in sooth are we kinsmen near.
And tell me, how fares it with thee? I would sorrow for this thy woe
Were my sorrow not all too heavy! Greater grief man may never know!'
Then she quoth, 'May His Mercy help thee, Who knoweth of all men's woe,

Perchance it may yet befall thee that His finger a way shall show
 That shall lead thee once more to Monsalväscher, and thine heart's bliss afresh shall spring.
 'Tis but short space since Kondrie left me, and I would I could tidings bring
 Of whither she went, but I asked not if she rode to the Burg again,
 Or passed elsewhere; but when she cometh by that streamlet she draweth rein,
 Where, from cleft in the high rock riven, the waters flow fresh and clear.
 It may be, if thou follow swiftly, that she rideth as yet anear,
 And, perchance, thou shalt overtake her.' Then the knight he made no delay
 But farewell did he bid to the maiden; and he followed the woodland way,
 And fresh were the tracks before him, but such pathway the mule must choose
 Thro' the depths of the dusky thicket that its traces he soon must lose.
 As the Grail he had lost of aforetime, so he lost It again to-day,
 And joy and delight fled with It—Yea, had he but found the way,
 And reached once again Monsalväscher, for better than erst of old
 Had he known how to ask the question—thus in sooth is the venture told.
 So now let him ride, but whither? Lo, a knight with uncovered head,
 And blazoned coat o'er his shining harness, full swiftly towards him sped!
 And to Parzival thus quoth he, 'Sir Knight, I must deem it ill
 That thus thro' the woods of my monarch thou takest thy way at will!
 Begone! or receive such token thou shalt wish thyself far from here!
 Monsalväscher doth never brook it that men ride thus its walls anear,
 And here must thou strive in battle, and win here a victor's fame,
 Or such penance be thine, as without there, in the open, men *Death* shall name!'

And he bare in his hand a helmet, and its bands were of silken sheen,
 Sharp-pointed his spear, and the spear-shaft was of wood new and strong I ween!
 And wrathful he bound his helmet on his head, not in vain should be
 His threat, for his blows should enforce it! Now ready for joust was he;
 But many a spear as goodly had splintered 'fore Parzival,
 And he thought, 'Now, it well had chanced me, that death to my lot should fall
 If I rode thro' the corn upstanding—*then* reason had he for wrath,
 But *now* hath he none, since I ride here on naught but a woodland path,
 And I tread here but fern and heather! An mine hand shall not lose its skill
 I will leave him such pledge for my journey as, I think me, shall please him ill!'

Then they rode at full speed their chargers, and they urged them with spur and rein,
 As the bolt from the bow of the archer so swift flew those heroes twain,
 And the first joust they rode unwounded; but many a knightly fray
 Unscathed had Parzival ridden, and e'en so should it chance to-day.
 (Unto skill and the lust of battle must his father's son be heir.)
 His lance-point upon the fastening of his foeman's helm struck fair,
 And it smote him where men in jousting their shield are wont to hold,
 And down from his gallant charger did he bear him, the Templar bold.
 And the knight of the Grail fell headlong down the side of a rocky dell,
 Tho' couch he had found, I think me, he slumbered not over well.
 But the victor's steed sped onward, and in vain would he check its flight
 Ere it fell, and well-nigh in falling had borne to his death the knight.
 A cedar o'erhung the chasm, its bough Parzival gripped fast,
 (Nor think ye scorn of my hero, that, as chanceth a thief at last,
 He hung, for none spake his judgment, he hung there by his own hand)
 His feet, for a foothold seeking, on the rock found at last their stand:
 Far out of his reach, beneath him, his gallant steed lay dead,
 Up the further side of the valley the Templar for safety fled.
 Think ye that he much might pride him on his token from Parzival?
 Far better at home in Monsalväscher had he fared with the wondrous Grail!
 To the plain once more climbed our hero, there the steed of the Templar stood,
 For down to the ground hung the bridle and fettered the war-horse good.

As the knight in his flight forgot it so it stood where its master fell,
 Swift Parzival sprang to the saddle, such booty might please him well.
 Of a truth his spear had he shattered, yet more than he lost he won—
 Nor Lâhelein, nor Kingrisein a better joust e'er had run!
 Nor King Gramoflanz nor Count Laskoit (the son he of Gurnemanz).
 Onward he rode, yet wandering, nor further befell mischance,
 Nor strife, from the knights of Monsalvâsch, yet one grief must vex his soul,
 He found not the Grail—Ever further he rode, further fled the goal!
 Now he who my song will hearken, he shall hear that which yet befell,
 Tho' the tale of the weeks I know not, that had flown since Sir Parzival
 Had met with the maid, and had ridden on venture as aye before—
 One morning the ground was snow-clad, and tho' thin was the cloak it bore
 Yet so thick it was that men, seeing, had deemed it the time of frost;
 As he rode thro' the depths of a woodland by a knight was his pathway crossed,
 And old was the knight, and grey bearded, yet his face it was bright and fair,
 And his lady who walked beside him like mien to her lord did bear.
 And each on their naked body wore a garment of horse-hair grey,
 For penance and pilgrimage minded they wended afoot their way.
 And their children, two gentle maidens, such as men's eyes are fain to see,
 In like garments they followed barefoot, e'en as pilgrims are wont to be.
 Then our hero the old knight greeted as he passed on his lowly way,
 And good was the rede, and holy, that he heard from his lips that day.
 And a prince of the land he seemed him—By each maiden a brachet ran,
 And with humble mien and reverent paced master alike and man.
 For both knight and squire they followed on this holy pilgrimage,
 And some, they were young and beardless, and some were bent low with age.
 But Parzival, our hero, he was clad in far other wise,
 In fair raiment, rich and costly, he rode in right knightly guise,
 And proudly he wore his harness, and unlike were the twain I ween,
 The old man in his robe of penance and the knight in his armour's sheen!
 Then swiftly he turned his bridle and held by the pathway side,
 For fain would he know of their journey, and friendly the knight replied.
 But a sorrow the old man deemed it that one to this Holy Tide
 Should have failed to give due honour, but in warlike gear should ride.
 For better would it befit him unarmèd this day to greet,
 Or like them to walk barefooted, and in garb for a sinner meet!
 Quoth Parzival, 'Nay, I know not what the time of the year may be,
 Or how men the tale may reckon of the weeks as they swiftly flee,
 How the days shall be named I know not, long have I forgot such lore!
 Of old time I served a master, and *God* was the name He bore.
 But He bare unto me no favour, and for guerdon He mocking gave,
 Tho' ne'er had my heart turned from Him—Men said, 'If from God ye crave
 For succour, He sure will give it;' but I deem well they spake a lie,
 For He who they said would help me, did help unto me deny!'
 Quoth the grey-haired knight, 'Dost thou mean Him who was once of a Maiden born?
 Dost believe that a Man for men's sake He died on the cross this morn,
 And this day for His sake we hallow? Then such garb becomes thee ill!
 For to-day all men call Good Friday, and the world it rejoiceth still
 O'er the day that her chains were riven; tho' she mourneth her Saviour's pain.
 Speak, knowest thou of faith more faithful than the faith God hath kept with men,
 Since He hung on the cross for men's sake? Such woe as He bare for thee,
 Sir Knight, sure must work thee sorrow, since baptized thou shalt surely be!
 For *our* sin His life was forfeit, or else had mankind been lost,
 And Hell as his prey had held us, and Hell's torments had paid sin's cost.
 Sir Knight, if thou be not heathen, thou shalt honour this Holy Day—

So do thou as here I counsel, ride thou on this woodland way,
 For near here a hermit dwelleth, as thy speech, so his rede shall be,
 And if ruth for ill deed thou showest of thy sin will he speak thee free!
 Then out quoth the old man's daughter, 'Nay, father, but speak not so,
 For too chill and cold is the morning, thou shalt bid him no further go.
 Far better to bid him warm him his steel-clad limbs, for strong
 And fair shall he be to look on, and the way is both cold and long.
 Methinks were he thrice as mighty he would freeze ere his goal he reach,
 And here hast thou tent for shelter, and viands for all and each.
 Came King Arthur and all his vassals thou wouldst still have enough I trow,
 So do thou as host so kindly, and good-will to this young knight show!'

Quoth the grey-haired sire, 'My daughters, Sir Knight, here give counsel good,
 Each year, with tent of pilgrim, I wend thro' this lonely wood.
 If warm or cold be the season I care not, as year by year
 The time of our dear Lord's Passion draweth once more anear,
 He rewardeth His servant's service—Sir Knight, what I, for His sake,
 Brought here, as my guest, right willing, I pray thee from me to take!'

And kindly they spake, the maidens, and they bade the knight to stay,
 And with gracious mien they prayed naught might drive him from them away.
 And tho' cold was the frost and bitter, and it wrought not as summer's heat,
 Yet Parzival saw their lips glow so red, and soft, and sweet.
 (Tho' they wept for the death of the Saviour, such sorrow became them well.)
 And here, had I cause for vengeance, an such happy chance befell,
 I never would speak them guiltless, but a kiss should their penance be,
 Nor against their will would I take it, of good-will should they give it me!
 For women shall aye be women, and tho' brave be the knight, and strong,
 Yet I ween is he oft the vanquished, nor the strife it endureth long!
 With sweet words, and ways so gentle, they ever the knight would pray,
 Children alike and parents, and fain would they have him stay:
 Yet he thought, 'It were best I leave them, for e'en if I turn aside
 All too fair methinks are these maidens, 'twere unfitting that I should ride
 While *they* by my side walk barefoot—And 'tis better that we should part,
 Since ever I bear Him hatred Whom they worship with lowly heart,
 And they look for His aid, Who ever hath turned His face from me,
 Nor from sorrow hath He withheld me, but hath wrought with me heavily!'

'Knight and Lady,' he quoth, 'I think me 'twere better I leave should pray,
 May good fortune be yours, and blessing, and fulness of joy alway,
 And may you, ye gentle maidens, find reward in your courtesy,
 Since so well ye had thought to serve me, fair leave would I pray from ye!'

He greeted them, low they bowed them, and greeted the knight again,
 Nor might they withhold their sorrow, for parting aye bringeth pain!
 So the son of Herzeleide rode onward, well taught was he
 In all manly skill and courage, in mercy and purity;
 And his mother had aye bequeathed him her faithful heart and true—
 Yet ever his soul waxed sadder, and there sprang up thoughts anew
 Of the might of the Maker of all things, Who hath made this earth of naught,
 How He dealeth with all creation, and still on His power he thought
 'How might it yet be if God sent me that which brought to an end my woe?
 If ever a knight He favoured, if ever a knight might know
 His payment for service done Him—if He thinketh His aid they earn
 Who dauntless shall wield their weapons, and ne'er from a foeman turn,
 Let Him aid me, who bear unstained shield and sword as befits a man,
 If to-day be His Day of Redemption, let Him help me, if help He *can*.'

Backward he turned his bridle on the road he had ridden before,
 And the knight and his children stood there, and mourned for the parting sore.

And the maidens, true and gentle, gazed after the passing knight,
And his heart spake, he fain had seen them once more those maidens bright.
Then he spake, 'Is God's power so mighty that He guideth upon their way
The steed alike and the rider, then His hand may I praise to-day!
If God sendeth help from heaven, then let Him my charger show
The goal which shall bless my journey, so shall I the token know.
Now, go thou as God shall lead thee!' and bridle and bit he laid
Free on the neck of his charger and spurred it adown the glade.
Towards Fontaine-Sauvage the road led, and the chapel where once he swore
The oath that should clear Jeschut —A holy man dwelt there,
And Trevezent men called him, and ever on Monday morn
Poor was his fare, and no richer it waxed as the week wore on.
Nor wine nor bread he tasted, nor food that with blood was red,
Fish nor flesh, but his life so holy on the herb of the ground was fed.
And ever his thoughts, God-guided, were turning to Heaven's land,
And by fasting the wiles of the Devil he deemed he might best withstand.
And to Parzival the mystery of the Grail should he now reveal—
And he, who of this hath asked me, and since silence my lips must seal
Was wroth with me as his foeman, his anger might naught avail,
Since I did but as Kiot bade me, for he would I should hide the tale,
And tell unto none the secret, till the venture so far were sped
That the hidden should be made open, and the marvel of men be read.
For Kiot of old, the master whom men spake of in days of yore,
Far off in Toledo's city, found in Arabic writ the lore
By men cast aside and forgotten, the tale of the wondrous Grail;
But first must he learn the letters, nor black art might there avail.
By the grace of baptismal waters, by the light of our Holy Faith,
He read the tale, else 'twere hidden; for never, the story saith,
Might heathen skill have shown us the virtue that hidden lies
In this mighty Grail, or Its marvels have opened to Christian eyes.
'Twas a heathen, Flegetanis, who had won for his wisdom fame,
And saw many a wondrous vision, (from Israel's race he came,
And the blood of the kings of old-time, of Solomon did he share,)
He wrote in the days long vanished, ere we as a shield might bear
The cross of our Holy Baptism 'gainst the craft and the wiles of Hell,
And he was the first of earth's children the lore of the Grail to tell.
By his father's side a heathen, a calf he for God did hold,
How wrought the devil such folly, on a folk so wise, of old?
And the Highest Who knoweth all wonders, why stretched He not forth His Hand
To the light of His truth to turn them? For who may His power withstand!
And the heathen, Flegetanis, could read in the heavens high
How the stars roll on their courses, how they circle the silent sky,
And the time when their wandering endeth—and the life and the lot of men
He read in the stars, and strange secrets he saw, and he spake again
Low, with bated breath and fearful, of the thing that is called the Grail,
In a cluster of stars was it written, the name, nor their lore shall fail.
And he quoth thus, 'A host of angels this marvel to earth once bore,
But too pure for earth's sin and sorrow the heaven they sought once more,
And the sons of baptized men hold It, and guard It with humble heart,
And the best of mankind shall those knights be who have in such service part'
Then Kiot my master read this, the tale Flegetanis told,
And he sought for the name of the people, in Latin books of old,
Who of God were accounted worthy for this wondrous Grail to care,
Who were true and pure in their dealings and a lowly heart might bear.
And in Britain, and France, and Ireland thro' the chronicles he sought

Till at length, in the land of Anjou, the story to light was brought.
 There, in true and faithful record, was it written of Mazadan,
 And the heroes, the sons of his body, and further the story ran,
 How Titurel, the grandsire, left his kingdom to Frimutel,
 And at length to his son, Anfortas, the Grail and Its heirdom fell:
 That his sister was Herzeleide, and with Gamuret she wed
 And bare him for son the hero whose wanderings ye now have read.
 For he rideth upon a journey that shall lead him a road unknown,
 Tho' the grey knight but now had wended his way from the fountain lone.
 And he knew again the meadow, tho' now the snow lay white
 On the ground that erst was blooming with flowers of springtide bright.
 'Twas before the rocky hillside where his hand must wipe away
 The stain from Jeschuté's honour, and her husband's wrath allay.
 Yet still the road led onward, to Fontaine-Sauvage, the name
 Of the goal that should end his journey and his hermit host he came.
 Then out spake the holy hermit, 'Alas, why doest thou so,
 Sir Knight? at this Holy Season 'tis ill thus armed to go.
 Dost thou bear perchance this harness thro' strife and danger dared?
 Or hast thou unharmèd ridden, and in peace on thy way hast fared?
 Other robe had beseemed thee better! List not to the voice of pride,
 But draw thy rein here beside me, and with me for a space abide.
 Not all too ill shalt thou fare here, thou canst warm thee beside my fire.
 Dost thou seek here for knightly venture, and dost guerdon of love desire,
 If the power of true Love constrain thee, then love Him who Love may claim!
 As this day to His Love beareth witness, be His service to-day thine aim,
 And serve for the love of fair women, if it please thee, another day;
 But now get thee from off thy charger, and awhile from thy wanderings stay.'
 Then Parzival, e'en as he bade him, sprang lightly unto the ground;
 Humbly he stood before him, as he told how he folk had found
 Who had told of the hermit's dwelling, and the counsel he wisely gave,
 And he spake, 'I am one who hath sinnèd, and rede at thy lips I crave!'
 As he spake the hermit answered, 'Right gladly I'll counsel thee,
 But, say, what folk hast thou met with? Who showed thee thy way to me?
 'In the wood I met with an old man grey-headed, and fair he spake,
 And kindly, I ween, were his people, he bade me this road to take,
 On his track my steed came hither.' Then answered the hermit old,
 "'Twas Kahenis, and his praises shall ever by men be told.
 A prince of the land of Punturtois, and his sister Kareis' king
 Hath taken to wife—Fairer maidens no mother to earth did bring
 Than those maidens twain, his daughters, who met thee upon thy road,
 Of a royal house, yet yearly he seeketh this poor abode!'
 Then Parzival spake to the hermit, 'Now say, when thou saw'st me here,
 Didst thou shrink from my warlike coming, didst thou feel no touch of fear?'
 Quoth the hermit, 'Sir Knight, believe me, far oftener for stag or bear
 Have I feared than I feared a man's face, in sooth shalt thou be aware
 I fear me for no man living! Both cunning and skill have I,
 And tho' I were loath to vaunt me, yet I ne'er to this life did fly
 For fear, as beseems a maiden! For never my heart did quail
 When I faced as a knight my foeman, and ne'er did my courage fail,
 In the days when such things became me, in the days when I too might fight,
 I was armèd as thou art armèd, like thee did I ride, a knight!
 And I strove for high love's rewarding, and many an evil thought
 With the pure mind within me battled, and ever my way I wrought
 To win from a woman favour! All that was in time of yore,
 And my body, by fasting wasted, remembereth those days no more.'

'Now give to mine hand the bridle, for there 'neath the rocky wall
 Thy steed shall abide in safety, and we, ere the night shall fall,
 Will gather of bough and herbage, since no better food may be,
 Yet I trust that both thou and thy charger fare not all too ill with me!
 But Parzival deemed that surely 'twas unfitting a hermit old
 Should thus lead his steed, and the bridle he would fain from his hand withhold,
 'Now courtesy sure forbids thee to strive 'gainst thine host's good-will,
 Let not haste from the right path lead thee, but follow my counsel still.
 In this wise spake the old man kindly, as he bade him, so did the knight,
 And the charger he led 'neath the hillside where but seldom did sun-rays light.
 In sooth 'twas a wondrous stable where the hermit the steed would stall,
 And thro' it, from heights o'erhanging, foamed ever a water-fall.
 The snow lay beneath our hero, no weakling was he, I ween,
 Else the frost and the cold of his harness o'er-much for his strength had been.
 To a cavern the hermit led him where no breath of wind might blow,
 And a fire of coals had warmed it, and burned with a ruddy glow.
 And here might the guest refresh him by the fire and a taper's light,
 (Well strewn was the ground with fuel,) then swiftly the gallant knight
 Laid from off him his heavy armour, and warmed his limbs so cold,
 And his skin in the light glowed ruddy, and his face might the host behold.
 He might well be of wandering weary, for never a trodden way
 Nor a roof save the stars of heaven had he known for many a day.
 In the daylight the wood had he ridden, and his couch, it had been the ground:
 'Twas well that he here a shelter, and a kindly host had found!
 Then his host cast a robe around him, and he took him by his right hand,
 And he led him into a cavern where his Missal did open stand.
 And as fitted the Holy Season the Altar was stripped and bare;
 And the shrine—Parzival must know it, 'twas the spot where he once did swear
 With true hand, true oath and faithful, that ended Jeschutë's woe,
 And turned her tears to laughter, and taught her fresh joy to know!
 Quoth Parzival, 'Well I know it this chapel and shrine! Of yore,
 As hither my wanderings led me, an oath on that shrine I swore;
 And a spear, with fair colours blazoned, that did here by the altar stand
 I bare hence, and in sooth, I think me, right well did it serve my hand!
 Men say it much honour brought me, yet I wot not if it be so,
 For in thoughts of my wife had I lost me, and naught of the thing I know.
 Yet, unwitting, two jousts had I ridden, and two foemen I overthrew,
 In those days all men gave me honour, nor sorrow nor shame I knew.
 Now, alas! is my sorrow greater than ever to man befell!
 Say, when did I bear the spear hence? The days of my wanderings tell!
 'It was Taurian,' quoth the hermit, 'who his spear in my care did leave,
 And much did he mourn its losing, and I with the knight must grieve.
 And four years and a half and three days shall have passed since we lost the spear,
 Sir Knight, an my word thou doubttest, behold! it is written here!
 Then he showed unto him in the Psalter how the time it had come and gone,
 And the weeks and the years he read him that silent and swift had flown.
 And he spake, 'Now first do I learn them, the days that I aimless stray,
 And the weeks and the years that have vanished, since my joy hath been reft away.'
 And he spake, 'Now indeed me-seemeth that my bliss it was but a dream,
 For heavy the load of sorrow that so long hath my portion been!'
 'And, Sir Host, I yet more would tell thee, where cloister or church shall be
 And men unto God give honour, there no eye hath looked on me,
 And naught but strife have I sought me, tho' the time as thou sayst be long,
 For I against God bear hatred, and my wrath ever waxeth strong.
 For my sorrow and shame hath He cherished, and He watched them greater grow

Till too high they waxed, and my gladness, yet living, He buried low!
 And I think were God fain to help me other anchor my joy had found
 Than this, which so deep hath sunk it, and with sorrow hath closed it round.
 A man's heart is mine, and sore wounded, it acheth, and acheth still,
 Yet once was it glad and joyous, and free from all thought of ill!
 Ere sorrow her crown of sorrow, thorn-woven, with stern hand pressed
 On the honour my hand had won me o'er many a foeman's crest!
 And I do well to lay it on Him, the burden of this my shame,
 Who can help if He will, nor withholdeth the aid that men fain would claim,
 But me alone, hath He helped not, whate'er men of Him may speak,
 But ever He turneth from me, and His wrath on my head doth wreak!
 Then the hermit beheld him sighing, 'Sir Knight, thou shalt put away
 Such madness, and trust God better, for His help will He never stay.
 And His aid to us here be given, yea, alike unto me and thee.
 But' twere best thou shouldst sit beside me, and tell here thy tale to me,
 And make to me free confession—How first did this woe begin?
 What foe shall have worked such folly that God should thine hatred win?
 Yet first would I pray thee, courteous, to hearken the word I say,
 For fain would I speak Him guiltless, ere yet thou thy plaint shall lay
 'Gainst Him, Who denieth never unto sinful man His aid,
 But ever hath answered truly, who truly to Him hath prayed.'
 'Tho' a layman I was yet ever in books might I read and learn
 How men, for His help so faithful, should ne'er from His service turn.
 Since aid He begrudged us never, lest our soul unto Hell should fall,
 And as God Himself shall be faithful, be *thou* faithful whate'er befall;
 For false ways He ever hateth—and thankful we aye should be
 When we think of the deed, so gracious, once wrought of His love so free!
 For *our* sake the Lord of Heaven in the likeness of man was made,
 And Truth is His name, and His nature, nor from Truth shall He e'er have strayed.
 And this shalt thou know most surely, God breaketh His faith with *none*.
 Teach thy thoughts ne'er from Him to waver, since Himself and His ways are One!
 'Wouldst thou force thy God with thine anger? He who heareth that thou hast sworn
 Hatred against thy Maker, he shall hold thee of wit forlorn!
 Of Lucifer now bethink thee, and of those who must share his fall,
 Bethink thee, the angel nature was free from all taint of gall,
 Say, whence sprang that root of evil which spurred them to endless strife,
 And won its reward in Hell's torments, and the death of an outcast life?
 Ashtaroth, Belcimon, and Belat, Rhadamant, yea, and many more!
 Pride and anger the host of Heaven with Hell's colours have painted o'er!
 'When Lucifer and his angels thus sped on their downward way,
 To fill their place, a wonder God wrought from the earth and clay:
 The son of His hands was Adam, and from flesh of Adam, Eve
 He brought, and for Eve's transgression, I ween, all the world doth grieve.
 For she hearkened not her Creator, and she robbed us of our bliss.
 And two sons sprang forth from her body, and the elder he wrought amiss,
 Since envy so worked upon him that from wrath there sprang disgrace,
 And of maidenhood did he rob her who was mother of all his race!
 Here many a one doth question, an the tale be to him unknown,
 How might such a thing have chanced? It came but by sin alone!
 Quoth Parzival, 'Now, I think me that never such thing might be,
 And 'twere better thou shouldst keep silence, than tell such a tale to me!
 For who should have borne the father, whose son, as thou sayest, reft
 Maidenhood from his father's mother? Such riddle were better left!
 But the hermit again made answer, 'Now thy doubt will I put away,
 O'er my falsehood thou canst bemoan thee if the thing be not truth I say,

For the *Earth* was Adam's mother, of the *Earth* was Adam fed,
 And I ween, tho' a man she bare here, yet still was the *Earth* a maid.
 And here will I read the riddle, he who robbed her of maidenhood
 Was Cain the son of Adam, who in wrath shed his brother's blood:
 For as on the *Earth*, so stainless, the blood of the guiltless fell,
 Her maidenhood fled for ever! And true is the tale I tell.
 For wrath of man and envy, thro' Cain did they wake to life,
 And ever from that day forward thro' his sin there ariseth strife.'
 'Nor on earth shall aught be purer than a maiden undefiled,
 Think how pure must be a maiden, since God was a Maiden's Child!
 Two men have been born of maidens, and God hath the likeness ta'en
 Of the son of the first *Earth*-Maiden, since to help us He aye was fain.
 Thus grief alike and gladness from the seed of Adam spring,
 Since He willed to be Son of Adam, Whose praises the angels sing.
 And yet have we sin as our birthright, and sin's pain must we ever bear,
 Nor its power may we flee! Yet pity He feeleth for our despair,
 Whose Strength is aye linked with Mercy, and with Mercy goes hand in hand,
 And for man, as a Man, He suffered, and did falsehood by truth withstand.'
 'No longer be wroth with thy Maker! If thou wouldst not thy soul were lost—
 And here for thy sin do penance, nor longer thus rashly boast,
 For he who, with words untamèd, is fain to avenge his wrong,
 His own mouth shall, I ween, speak his judgment ere ever the time be long.
 Learn faith from the men of old-time, whose rede ever waxeth new,
 For Plato alike and the Sibyls in their day spake words so true,
 And long years ere the time had ripened His coming they did foretell
 Who made for our sin's Atonement, and drew us from depths of Hell.
 God's Hand from those torments took us, and God's Love lifted us on high,
 But they who His love disdainèd, they yet in Hell's clutches lie!'
 'From the lips of the whole world's Lover came a message of love and peace,
 (For He is a Light all-lightening, and never His faith doth cease,)
 And he to whom love He showeth, findeth aye in that Love his bliss,
 Yet twofold I ween is the message, and His token some read amiss;
 For the world may buy, as it pleaseth, God's Wrath or His Love so great.
 Say, which of the twain wilt thou choose here, shall thy guerdon be Love or Hate?
 For the sinner without repentance, he flieth God's faith and Face,
 But he who his sin confesseth, doth find in His presence grace!'
 'From the shrine of his heart, who shall keep Him? Tho' hidden the thought within,
 And secret, and thro' its darkness no sunbeam its way may win,
 (For thought is a secret chamber, fast locked, tho' no lock it bear,)
 Yet, tho' against man it be closèd, God's light ever shineth there.
 He pierceth the wall of darkness, and silent and swift His spring,
 As no sound betrayed His coming, as no footstep was heard to ring,
 So silent His way He goeth—And swift as our thoughts have flown,
 Ere God passed of our heart the threshold, our thoughts unto Him were known!
 And the pure in heart He chooseth; he who doth an ill deed begin,
 Since God knoweth the thoughts of all men, full sorely shall rue his sin.
 And the man who by deeds God's favour doth forfeit, what shall he gain?
 Tho' the world count him honour-worthy, his soul seeketh rest in vain.
 And where wilt thou seek for shelter if *God* as thy foeman stand,
 Who of wrath or of love giveth payment, as men serve Him, with equal hand?
 Thou art lost if thy God be against thee—If thou wouldst His favour earn,
 Then away from thy wrath and thy folly thy thoughts to His goodness turn!'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Here I thank thee, from my heart, that such faithful rede
 Thou hast given of him who withholdeth from no man his rightful meed,
 But evil, as good, requiteth—Yet my youth hath been full of care,

And my faith hath but brought me sorrow, and ill to this day I fare!
 Then the hermit he looked on the Waleis, 'If a secret be not thy grief,
 Right willing thy woe I'll hearken, I may bring thee perchance relief;
 Of some counsel may I bethink me such as yet to thyself dost fail!'

Quoth Parzival, 'Of my sorrows the chiefest is for the Grail,
 And then for my wife—none fairer e'er hung on a mother's breast,
 For the twain is my heart yet yearning, with desire that ne'er findeth rest.'

Quoth his host, 'Well, Sir Knight, thou speakest, such sorrow is good to bear;
 If thus for the wife of thy bosom thy heart knoweth grief and care,
 And Death find thee a faithful husband, tho' Hell vex thee with torments dire
 Yet thy pains shall be swiftly ended, God will draw thee from out Hell-fire.
 But if for the *Grail* thou grieveest, then much must I mourn thy woe,
 O! foolish man, since fruitless thy labours, for thou shalt know
 That none win the Grail save those only whose names are in Heaven known,
 They who to the Grail do service, they are chosen of God alone;
 And mine eyes have surely seen this, and sooth is the word I say!'

Quoth Parzival, 'Thou hast been there?' 'Sir Knight,' quoth the hermit, 'Yea!'
 But never a word spake our hero of the marvels himself had seen,
 But he asked of his host the story, and what men by 'The Grail' should mean?
 Spake the hermit, 'Full well do I know this, that many a knightly hand
 Serveth the Grail at Monsalvasch, and from thence, throughout all the land,
 On many a distant journey these gallant Templars fare,
 Whether sorrow or joy befall them, for their sins they this penance bear!'

'And this brotherhood so gallant, dost thou know what to them shall give
 Their life, and their strength and their valour—then know, by a *stone* they live,
 And that stone is both pure and precious—Its name hast thou never heard?
 Men call it *Lapis Exilis*—by its magic the wondrous bird,
 The Phoenix, becometh ashes, and yet doth such virtue flow
 From the stone, that afresh it riseth renewed from the ashes glow,
 And the plumes that erewhile it moulted spring forth yet more fair and bright—
 And tho' faint be the man and feeble, yet the day that his failing sight
 Beholdeth the stone, he dies not, nor can, till eight days be gone,
 Nor his countenance wax less youthful—If one daily behold that stone,
 (If a man it shall be, or a maiden 'tis the same,) for a hundred years,
 If they look on its power, their hair groweth not grey, and their face appears
 The same as when first they saw it, nor their flesh nor their bone shall fail
 But young they abide for ever—And this stone all men call the Grail.'

'And Its holiest power, and the highest shall I ween be renewed to-day,
 For ever upon Good Friday a messenger takes her way.
 From the height of the highest Heaven a Dove on her flight doth wing,
 And a Host, so white and holy, she unto the stone doth bring.
 And she layeth It down upon It; and white as the Host the Dove
 That, her errand done, swift wingeth her way to the Heaven above.
 Thus ever upon Good Friday doth it chance as I tell to thee:
 And the stone from the Host receiveth all good that on earth may be
 Of food or of drink, the earth beareth as the fulness of Paradise.
 All wild things in wood or in water, and all that 'neath Heaven flies,
 To that brotherhood are they given, a pledge of God's favour fair,
 For His servants He ever feedeth and the Grail for their needs doth care!'

'Now hearken, the Grail's elect ones, say who doth their service claim?
 On the Grail, in a mystic writing, appeareth each chosen name,
 If a man it shall be, or a maiden, whom God calls to this journey blest.
 And the message no man effaceth, till all know the high behest,
 But when all shall the name have read there, as it came, doth the writing go:
 As children the Grail doth call them, 'neath its shadow they wax and grow.

And blessed shall be the mother whose child doth the summons hear,
 Rich and poor alike rejoiceth when the messenger draweth near,
 And the Grail son or daughter claimeth! They are gathered from every land,
 And ever from shame and sorrow are they sheltered, that holy band.
 In Heaven is their rewarding, if so be that they needs must die,
 Then bliss and desire's fulfilment are waiting them all on high!
 'They who took no part in the conflict, when Lucifer would fight
 With the Three-in-One, those angels were cast forth from Heaven's height.
 To the earth they came at God's bidding, and that wondrous stone did tend,
 Nor was It less pure for their service, yet their task found at last an end.
 I know not if God forgave them, or if they yet deeper fell,
 This one thing I know of a surety, what God doeth, He doeth well!
 But ever since then to this service nor maiden nor knight shall fail,
 For God calleth them all as shall please Him!—and so standeth it with the Grail!'

Quoth Parzival, 'So, since knighthood may conquer, with spear and shield,
 Both the fame of *this* life, and the blessing which Paradise shall yield,
 Since my soul ever longed for knighthood, and I fought where'er strife might be,
 And my right hand hath neared full often the guerdon of victory,
 If God be the God of battles, if He know how a man should fight,
 Let Him name me as one of His servants, of the Grail let Him make me knight!
 They shall own that I fear no danger, nor from strife would I turn aside!'

But the hermit made answer gently, 'First must thou beware of pride,
 For lightly may youth mislead thee; and the grace of humility
 Mayst thou lose, and the proud God doth punish, as full surely is known to me!
 And tears filled his eyes to o'erflowing, and his sad thoughts awhile did turn
 To a story of old, and our hero he bade from its lesson learn.
 And he quoth, 'Sir Knight, at Monsalväsch a king reigned in days of yore,
 His name all men know as Anfortas, and I weep for him evermore.
 Yea, and thou too shalt mourn his sorrow, for bitter the woe, I ween,
 And the torment of heart and body that his guerdon from pride hath been.
 For his youth and his worldly riches they led him an evil road,
 And he sought for Frau Minne's favour in paths where no peace abode.'
 'But the Grail all such ways forbiddeth, and both knight alike and squire
 Who serve the Grail must guard them from the lust of untamed desire.
 By meekness their pride must be conquered, if they look for a heavenly prize,
 And the brotherhood holdeth hidden the Grail from all stranger eyes:
 By their warlike skill and prowess the folk from the lands around,
 They keep afar, and none knoweth where the Grail and Its Burg are found
 Save those whom the Grail shall summon within Monsalväsch' wall—
 Yet *one*, uncalled, rode thither and evil did then befall,
 For foolish he was, and witless, and sin-laden from thence did fare,
 Since he asked not his host of his sorrow and the woe that he saw him bear.
 No man would I blame, yet *this* man, I ween, for his sins must pay,
 Since he asked not the longed-for question which all sorrow had put away.
 (Sore laden his host with suffering, earth knoweth no greater pain.)
 And before him King Lähelein came there, and rode to the Lake Brimbane.
 Libbèals, the gallant hero, a joust there was fain to ride,
 And Lähelein lifeless left him, on the grass by the water-side,
 (Prienlaskors, methinks, was his birthplace) and his slayer then led away
 His charger, so men knew the evil thus wrought by his hand that day.'
 'And I think me, Sir Knight, *thou* art Lähelein? For thou gavest unto my care
 A steed that such token showeth as the steeds of the Grail Knights bear!
 For the white dove I see on its housing, from Monsalväsch it surely came?
 Such arms did Anfortas give them while joy yet was his and fame.
 Their shields bare of old the token, Titurel gave it to his son

Frimutel, and such shield bare that hero when his death in a joust he won.
 For his wife did he love so dearly no woman was loved so well
 By man, yet in truth and honour,—and the same men of thee shall tell
 If thou wakenest anew old customs, and thy wife from thine heart dost love—
 Hold thou fast to such fair example lest thy steps from the right path rove!
 And in sooth thou art wondrous like him who once o'er the Grail did reign,
 Say, what is thy race? whence art thou? and tell me I pray thy name!'

Each gazed for a space on the other, and thus quoth Parzival,
 'Son am I to a king and hero who through knightly courage fell,
 In a joust was he slain—Now I pray thee, Sir Hermit, of this thy grace,
 That thou, in thy prayers henceforward, wilt give to his name a place.
 Know, Gamuret, did they call him, and he came from fair Anjou—
 Sir Host I am not Lâhelein; if ever such sin I knew

'Twas in my days of folly, yet in truth have I done the same,
 Here I make of my guilt confession, and my sin unto thee I name,
 For the prince who once fell a victim unto my sinful hand
 Was he whom men called 'the Red Knight,' Prince Ither of Cumberland.
 On the greensward I lifeless stretched him, and as at my feet he lay,
 Harness, and horse, and weapons, as my booty I bare away!'

Spake the host as his words were ended, (the tale he ill pleased must hear,
 'Ah! world, wherefore deal thus with us? since sorrow and grief and fear
 Far more than delight dost thou give us! Say, is this thy reward alone?
 For ever the song that thou singest doth end in a mournful tone!'

And he spake, 'O thou son of my sister, what rede may I give to thee?
 Since the knight thou hast slain in thy folly, thy flesh and thy blood was he!
 If thou, blood-guiltiness bearing, shalt dare before God to stand,
 For one blood were ye twain, to God's justice thy life shall repay thine hand.
 Say, for Ither of Gaheviess fallen, what payment dost think to give?
 The crown he of knightly honour! God gave him, while he might live.
 All that decketh man's life; for all evil his true heart did truly mourn,
 True balsam was he of the faithful, to honour and glory born.
 And shame fled before his coming, and truth in his heart did dwell,
 And for love of his lovely body many women shall hate thee well!
 For well did they love his coming, and to serve them he aye was fain,
 But their eyes that shone fair for his fairness he ne'er shall rejoice again!
 Now, may God show His mercy to thee whose hand hath such evil wrought,
 Herzeleide the queen, thy mother, thou too to her death hast brought—'

'Nay! Nay! not so, holy father! What sayest thou?' quoth Parzival,
 'Of what dost thou here accuse me? Were I king o'er the wondrous Grail
 Not all Its countless riches would repay me if this be sooth,
 These words that thy lips have spoken! And yet if I, in very truth,
 Be son unto thy sister, then show that thou mean'st me well,
 And say, without fear or falsehood, are these things true that thou dost tell?'

Then the hermit he spake in answer, 'Ne'er learnt I to deceive,
 Thy mother she died of sorrow in the day thou her side didst leave,
 Such rewarding her love won for her! *Thou* wast the beast that hung
 On her breast, the wingèd dragon that forth from her body sprung,
 That spread its wings and left her: in a dream was it all foretold
 Ere yet the sorrowing mother the babe to her breast did hold!'

'And two other sisters had I, Schoisianè she was one;
 She bare a child—Woe is me, her death thro' this birth she won!
 Duke Kiot of Katelangen was her husband, and since that day
 All wordly joy and honour he putteth from him away.
 Siguné, their little daughter, was left to thy mother's care:
 And sorrow for Schoisianè in my heart do I ever bear!

So true was her heart and faithful, an ark 'gainst the flood of sin.
A maiden, my other sister, her pure life doth honour win,
For the Grail she ever tendeth—Repanse de Schoie, her name,
Tho' none from Its place may move It whose heart showeth taint of shame,
In *her* hands is It light as a feather—And brother unto us twain
Is Anfortas, by right of heirship he king o'er the Grail doth reign;
And he knoweth not joy, but sorrow, yet one hope I ween is his,
That his pain shall at last be turned to delight and to endless bliss.
And wondrous the tale of his sorrow, as, nephew, I'll tell to thee,
And if true be thine heart and faithful his grief shall thy sorrow be!
'When he died, Frimutel, our father, they chose them his eldest son
As Lord of the Grail and Its knighthood, thus Anfortas his kingdom won,
And of riches and crown was he worthy, and we were but children still—
When he came to the years of manhood, when love joyeth to work her will
On the heart, and his lips were fringed with the down of early youth,
Frau Minne laid stress upon him who for torment hath little ruth.
But if love the Grail King seeketh other than he find writ,
'Tis a sin, and in sorrow and sighing full sore shall he pay for it!
'And my lord and brother chose him a lady for service fair,
Noble and true he deemed her, I say not what name she bare;
Well he fought in that lady's honour, and cowardice from him fled,
And his hand many a shield-rim shattered, by love's fire was he venture led.
So high stood his fame that no hero in knightly lands afar
Could he brook to be thought his equal, so mighty his deeds of war,
And his battle-cry was "Amor," yet it seemeth unto me
Not all too well such cry suiteth with a life of humility.'
'One day as the king rode lonely, in search of some venture high
(Sore trouble it brought upon us,) with love's payment for victory,
For love's burden lay heavy on him, in a joust was he wounded sore
With a poisoned spear, so that healing may be wrought on him nevermore.
For thine uncle, the King Anfortas, he was smitten thro' the thigh
By a heathen who with him battled, for he jousted right skilfully.
He came from the land of Ethnisé, where forth from fair Paradise
Flow the streams of the River Tigris, and he thought him, that heathen wise,
He should win the Grail, and should hold It—On his spear had he graven his name,
From afar sought he deeds of knighthood, over sea and land he came.
The fame of the Grail drew him thither, and evil for us his strife,
His hand joy hath driven from us and clouded with grief our life!
'But thine uncle had battled bravely and men praised his name that day—
With the spear-shaft yet fast in his body he wended his homeward way.
And weeping arose and wailing as he came once again to his own,
And dead on the field lay his foeman, nor did we for his death make moan!
'When the king came, all pale and bloodless, and feeble of strength and limb,
Then a leech stretched his hand to the spear-wound, and the iron he found fast within,
With the hilt, wrought of reed, and hollow, and the twain from the wound he drew.
Then I fell on my knees, and I vowed me to God, with a heart so true,
That henceforward the pride of knighthood, and its fame, would I know no more,
If but God would behold my brother and would succour his need so sore.
Then flesh, wine, and bread I forswore there, and all food that by blood might live,
That lust might no longer move me my life I to God would give,
And I tell thee, O son of my sister, that the wailing arose anew
When my weapons I put from off me and ungirded my sword so true,
And they spake, 'Who shall guard our mysteries? who shall watch o'er the wondrous Grail?'
And tears fell from the eyes of the maidens, but their weeping might naught avail!
'To the Grail, then, they bare Anfortas, if Its virtue might bring relief;

But, alas! when his eyes beheld It yet heavier waxed his grief
 As the life sprang afresh within him, and he knew that he might not die;
 And he liveth, while here I hide me in this life of humility,
 And the power of the Grail, and Its glory, with their monarch have waxen weak.
 For the venom, his wound that poisoned, tho' the leeches their books did seek
 Yet found they nor help nor healing—Yea, all that their skill might learn
 'Gainst the poison of Aspis, Elkontius, of Liseis, and Ecidemon,
 All spells 'gainst the worm empoisoned, 'gainst Jecis or Meätis;
 Or all that a wise man knoweth of roots or of herbs; I wis
 Naught was there in all might help him; nor rede I a longer tale
 Since *God* willeth not his healing what man's skill may aught avail?'
 'Then we sent to the mystic waters, in a far-off land they rise,
 Pison, Gihon, Tigris, Euphrates, the rivers of Paradise,
 And so near they flow that the perfumes which breathe from its scented air
 Shall yet to their streams be wafted—If their waters perchance might bear
 Some plant from the wondrous garden that might succour us in our woe,
 But vain thought, and fruitless labour, fresh sorrow our heart did know!'

'Nor here did we end our labour, for again for the bough we sought
 Which the Sibyl unto Æneas as a shield 'gainst Hell's dangers brought.
 'Gainst the smoke and the fire of Phlegethon, and the rivers that flow in Hell
 Would it guard, and for long we sought it, for we thought, if such chance befell
 That the spear in Hell-fire was welded, and the poison from Hell did spring
 That thus of our joy had robbed us, then this bough might salvation bring!'

'But Hell, it knew naught of the poison! There liveth a wondrous bird
 Who loveth too well her fledglings—Of the Pelican's love we heard,
 How she teareth her breast and feedeth her young with the quickening food
 Of her own life-blood, and then dieth—So we took of that bird the blood,
 Since we thought that her love might help us, and we laid it upon the sore
 As best we could—Yet, I wot well, no virtue for us it bore!'

'A strange beast, the Unicorn, liveth, and it doth in such honour keep
 The heart of a spotless maiden that it oft at her knee will sleep.
 And the heart of that beast we took us, and we took us the red-fire stone
 That lies 'neath its horn, if the king's wound might its healing virtue own.
 And we laid on the wound the carbuncle, and we put it the wound within,
 Yet still was the sore empoisoned nor aid from the stone might win!'

'And sore with the king we sorrowed—Then a magic herb we found,
 (Men say, from the blood of a dragon it springeth from out the ground,)

With the stars, and the wind, and the heaven, close-bound, doth it win its power,
 Lest perchance, by the flight of the dragon, when the stars bring the circling hour,
 And the moon draweth near to her changing, (for sorer then grows the pain.)
 The herb might our grief have aided—Yet its magic we sought in vain!'

'Then the knights of the Grail knelt lowly, and for help to the Grail they prayed,
 And, behold! the mystic writing, and a promise it brought of aid,
 For a knight should come to the castle, and so soon as he asked the king
 Of the woe that so sorely pained him his question should healing bring.
 But let them beware, man or maiden, or child, should they warn the knight
 Of his task, he no healing bringeth, greater waxeth the sorrow's might.
 And the writing it ran, 'Ye shall mark this, forewarning shall bring but ill,
 And in the first night of his coming must the healer his task fulfil,
 Or the question shall lose its virtue; but if at the chosen hour
 He shall speak, *his* shall be the kingdom, and the evil hath lost its power.
 So the hand of the Highest sendeth to Anfortas the end of woe,
 Yet *King* shall he be no longer tho' healing and bliss he know.'

'Thus we read in the Grail that our sorrow should come to an end that day
 That the knight should come who the meaning of the grief that he saw should pray—

Then salve of Nard we took us, and Teriak, and the wound we dressed,
 And we burnt wood of Lignum Aloe for so might the king find rest.
 Yet ever he suffereth sorely—Then fled I unto this place,
 And my life little gladness knoweth till my brother hath gotten grace.
 And the knight, he hath come, and hath left us, and ill for us all that day,
 (But now did I speak of his coming,) sorrow-laden he rode away,
 For he saw his host's woe and asked not, 'What aileth thee here, mine host?'
 Since his folly such words forbade him great bliss shall he there have lost!
 Then awhile did they mourn together till the mid-day hour drew near,
 And the host spake, 'We must be seeking for food, and thine horse, I fear,
 As yet shall be lacking fodder; nor know I how we shall feed
 If not God in His goodness show us the herbs that shall serve our need,
 My kitchen but seldom smoketh! Forgive thou the lack to-day,
 And abide here, so long as shall please thee, if thy journey shall brook delay.
 Of plants and of herbs would I teach thee much lore, if so be the grass
 Were not hidden by snow—God grant us that this cold may be soon o'erpast—
 Now break we yew-boughs for thy charger, far better its fare hath been
 Erewhile 'neath the roof of Monsalväsche than shall here be its lot I ween!
 Yet never a host shall ye meet with who rider alike and steed
 Would as gladly bid share of his substance as I, had I all ye need!'

Then the twain they went forth on their errand—Parzival for his steed had care,
 While the hermit for roots was seeking since no better might be their fare;
 And the host his rule forgot not, he ate naught, whate'er he found,
 Till the ninth hour, but ever hung them, as he drew them from out the ground,
 On the nearest shrub, and there left them; many days he but ill might fare
 For God's honour, since oft he lost them, the shrubs which his roots did bear.
 Nor grudged they aught of their labour: then they knelt by the streamlet's flow,
 And the roots and the herbs they washed there, and no laughter their lips might know.
 Then their hands they washed, and the yew-boughs Parzival together bound
 And bare them unto his charger ere the cavern again he found;
 Then the twain by the fireside sat them, nor further might food be brought,
 Nor on roast nor on boiled they fed them, nor found in their kitchen aught.
 Yet so true was the love and the honour Parzival to the hermit bare
 That he deemed he enough had eaten, and no better had been his fare
 With Gurnemanz of Graharz, or e'en in Monsalväsche hall,
 When the maidens passed fair before him and the Grail fed them each and all.
 Then his kindly host quoth, 'Nephew, despise not this food, for know
 Lightly thou shalt not find one who shall favour and kindness show,
 Of true heart, without fear of evil, as fain would I show to thee.'
 And Parzival quoth, 'May God's favour henceforward ne'er light on me
 If food ever better pleased me, or I ate with a better will
 What a host ever set before me, such fare doth content me still.'
 Their hands they need not wash them for such food as before them lay,
 'Twas no fish, that their eyes had harmed as men oft are wont to say.
 And were I or hawk or falcon I had lent me to the chase,
 Nor stooped to the lure unwilling, nor fled from my master's face,
 But an they no better fed me than at noontide they fed, these twain,
 I had spread my wings right swiftly, nor come to their call again!
 Why mock at this folk so faithful? 'Twas ever my way of old—
 Yet ye know why, forsaking riches, they chose to them want and cold,
 And the lack of all things joyful, such sorrow and grief of heart
 They bare of true heart, God-fearing, nor had they in falsehood part;
 And thus from the hand of the Highest they won payment for grief and woe,
 And alike should the twain God's favour, as of old, so hereafter know.
 Then up stood they again, and they gat them, Parzival and the holy man,

To the steed in its rocky stable, and full sadly the host began
 As he spake to the noble charger, 'Woe is me for thy scanty fare,
 For the sake of the saddle upon thee and the token I see thee bear!'

When their care for the horse was ended, then sorrow sprang forth anew,
 Quoth Parzival, 'Host and uncle, my folly I needs must rue,
 And fain would I tell the story if for shame I the word may speak;
 Forgive me, I pray, of thy kindness, since in thee do I comfort seek,
 For sorely, I ween, have I sinnèd; if thou canst no comfort find
 No peace may be mine, but for ever the chains of remorse shall bind.
 Of true heart shalt thou mourn my folly—He who to Monsalväschröde,
 He who saw Anfortas' sorrow, he who spake not the healing word,
 'Twas I, child and heir of misfortune, 'twas I, Parzival, alone,
 Ill have I wrought, and I know not how I may for such ill atone!'

Spake the hermit, 'Alas! my nephew, thou speakest the words of woe,
 Vanished our joy, and sorrow henceforth must we grasp and know,
 Since folly of bliss betrayed thee: senses five did God give to thee,
 And methinks, in the hour of thy testing, their counsel should better be.
 Why guarded they not thine honour, and thy love as a man to men,
 In the hour that thou satst by Anfortas? Of a truth hadst thou spoken then!'

'Nor would I deny thee counsel; mourn not for thy fault too sore,
 Thou shalt, in a fitting measure, bewail thee, and grief give o'er.
 For strange are the ways, and fitful, of mankind, oft is youth too wise
 And old age turneth back to folly, and darkened are wisdom's eyes,
 And the fruit of a life lieth forfeit, while green youth doth wax old and fade—
 Not in this wise true worth shall be rooted, and payment in praise be paid.
 Thine youth would I see fresh blooming, and thine heart waxing strong and bold,
 While thou winnest anew thine honour, nor dost homage from God withhold.
 For thus might it chance unto thee to win for thyself such fame
 As shall make amends for thy sorrow, and God thee, as His knight, shall claim!'

'Thro' my mouth would God teach thee wisdom; now say, didst thou see the spear,
 In that wondrous Burg of Monsalväschröde? As ever the time draws near
 When Saturn his journey endeth—(that time by the wound we know,
 And yet by another token, by the fall of the summer snow)
 Then sorely the frost doth pain him, thy king and uncle dear,
 And deep in the wound empoisoned once more do they plunge the spear,
 One woe shall help the other, the spear cure the frost's sharp pain,
 And crimson it grows with his life-blood ere men draw it forth again!'

'When the stars return in their orbit, then the wailing it waxeth sore,
 When they stand in opposition, or each to the other draw.
 And the moon, in its waxing and waning, it causeth him bitter pain—
 In the time that I erst have told thee then the king little rest may gain;
 His flesh thro' the frost it groweth colder than e'en the snow,
 But men know that the spear sharp-pointed doth with fiery venom glow,
 And upon the wound they lay it, and the frost from his flesh so cold
 It draweth, and lo! as crystals of glass to the spear doth hold,
 And as ice to the iron it clingeth, and none looseth it from the blade.
 Then Trebuchet the smith bethought him, in his wisdom two knives he made,
 Of silver fair he wrought them, and sharp was the edge and keen—
 (A spell on the king's sword written had taught him such skill I ween,)

Tho' no flame on earth can kindle Asbestos, as men do tell,
 And never a fire may harm it, if these crystals upon it fell
 Then the flame would leap and kindle and burn with a fiery glow
 Till th' Asbestos lay in ashes, such power doth this poison know!'

'The king, he rideth never, nor yet may he walk, or lie,
 And he sitteth not, but, reclining, in tears his sad days pass by.

And the moon's changes work him evil—To a lake they call Brimbane
They bear him full oft for fishing that the breezes may soothe his pain.
This he calleth his day for hunting, tho' what booty shall be his share,
And he vex himself to gain it, for his host 'twould be meagre fare!
And from this there sprang the story that he should but a Fisher be,
Tho little he recked the fable, no merchant I ween was he
Of salmon or aye of lamprey, he had chosen far other game
Were he freed from the load of sorrow and the burden of bitter pain.'
Quoth Parzival, 'So I found him; the king's skiff at anchor lay,
And for pastime, e'en as a fisher, the even he wore away;
And many a mile had I ridden that day, since from Pelrapär
When the sun stood high in the heaven, at noontide I forth must fare;
And at even I much bethought me where my shelter that night might be,
Then my uncle did fair entreat me, and my host for a space was he.'
'A perilous way didst thou ride there,' spake the host, 'one that well they guard
Those Templars, nor strength nor cunning brings a traveller thro' their ward,
For danger full oft besets him, and oft he his life shall lose,
Life against life is their penance, all quarter these knights refuse.'
'Yet scatheless I passed that woodland in the day that I found the king
By the lake,' quoth the knight, 'and at even his palace with grief did ring,
And sure, as they mourned, I think me, no folk ever mourned before!
In the hall rose the voice of wailing as a squire sprang within the door,
And a spear in his hand he carried, and to each of the walls he stept,
Red with blood was the spear, as they saw it, the people they mourned and wept.'
Then answered the host, 'Far sorer than before was the monarch's pain,
In this wise did he learn the tidings that Saturn drew near again,
And the star with a sharp frost cometh, and it helpeth no whit to lay
The spear on the sore as aforetime, in the wound must it plunge away!
When that star standeth high in heaven the wound shall its coming know
Afore, tho' the earth shall heed not, nor token of frost shall show.
But the cold it came, and the snow-flakes fell thick in the following night
Tho' the season was spring, and the winter was vanquished by summer's might.
As the frost to the king brought sorrow and pain, so his people true
Were of joy bereft, as the moment of his anguish thus nearer drew.'
And Trevezent quoth, 'In sorrow that folk hath both lot and part,
When the spear thro' the king's wound pierceth, it pierceth each faithful heart.
And their love to their lord, and their sorrow, such tears from their eyelids drew
That, methinks, in those bitter waters had they been baptized anew.'
Spake Parzival unto the hermit, 'Five-and-twenty they were, the maids
I saw stand before the monarch, and courteous their part they played.'
And the host spake, 'By God's high counsel such maidens alone avail
For the care of this wondrous mystery, and do service before the Grail.
And the Grail, It chooseth strictly, and Its knights must be chaste and pure,—
When the star standeth high in the heaven then grief must that folk endure,
And the young they mourn as the aged, and God's wrath it lasts for aye,
And ne'er to their supplication doth He hearken and answer "Yea."
'And, nephew, this thing would I tell thee, and my word shalt thou well believe,
They who to the Grail do service, they take, and again they give.
For they take to them tittle children, noble of birth and race—
If a land be without a ruler, and its people shall seek God's Face
And crave of His Hand a monarch, then He hearkeneth to their prayer,
And a knight, from the Grail host chosen, as king to that land doth fare.
And well shall he rule that people, and happy shall be that land,
For the blessing of God goeth with him and God's wisdom doth guide his hand.'

'God sendeth the *men* in secret, but the *maidens* in light of day
 Are given unto their husbands; thus none spake to his wooing, Nay,
 When King Kastis wooed Herzeleide, but joyful our sister gave,
 Yet ne'er might her love rejoice him for Death dug at his feet a grave.
 But in life had he given thy mother both Norgals and fair Waleis,
 Those kingdoms twain and their cities, Kingrivals and Kanvoleis.
 'Twas a fair gift, and known of all men—Then they rode on their homeward way,
 But Death met them upon their journey, and he made of the king his prey,
 And over both Waleis and Norgals Herzeleide, as queen, did reign,
 Till Gamuret's right hand valiant won the maid, and her kingdoms twain.'
 'Thus the Grail Its maidens giveth, in the day, and the sight of men,
 But It sendeth Its knights in the silence and their children It claims again,—
 To the host of the Grail are they counted, Grail servants they all shall be,
 So the will of God standeth written on the Grail for all men to see.'
 'He who would to the Grail do service, he shall women's love forswear:
 A wife shall none have save the Grail king, and his wife a pure heart must bear,
 And those others whom God's Hand sendeth, as king, to a kingless land—
 But little I recked such counsel, to love's service I vowed my hand,
 As the pride of my youth constrained me, and the beauty of woman's eyes,
 And I rode full oft in her service, and I battled for knighthood's prize.
 Fain was I for wild adventure, on jousting no more I thought,
 So fair shone the love-light on me ever fiercer the strife I sought.
 And thro' far-off lands and distant, in the service of love I fared,
 And to win sweet love's rewarding right valiant the deeds I dared.
 If heathen my foe or Christian, what mattered it unto me?
 The fiercer the strife that beset me, the fairer my prize should be!'
 'And thus, for the love of woman, in three parts of the earth I fought,
 In Europe, and far-off Asia, and in Afric' I honour sought.
 If for gallant jousting I lusted I fought before Gaurivon;
 By the mystic Mount of Fay-Morgan I many a joust have run.
 And I fought by the Mount Agremontin, where are fiery men and fierce,
 Yet the other side they burn not tho' their spears thro' the shield can pierce.
 In Rohas I sought for ventures, and Slavs were my foemen then,
 With lances they came against me and I trow they were gallant men!'
 'From Seville I took my journey, and I sailed o'er the tideless sea
 Unto Sicily, since thro' Friant and Aquilea should my journey be.
 Alas! alas! woe is me, for I met with thy father there,
 I found him, and looked upon him, ere I from Seville must fare.
 For e'en as I came to the city he there for a space abode,
 And my heart shall be sore for his journey, since thence to Bagdad he rode,
 And there, as thyself hast spoken, in a knightly joust he fell,
 And for ever my heart must mourn him, and my tongue of his praises tell!'
 'A rich man shall be my brother, nor silver nor gold would spare
 When in secret I forth from Monsalväsch at his will and his word did fare;
 For I took me his royal signet, and to Karkobra I came,
 Where Plimizöl to the wide sea floweth, and the land, Barbigöl, they name.
 And the Burg-grave he knew the token, ere I rode from the town again
 Of horses and squires, as failed me, he raised me a gallant train,
 And we rode thence to wild adventures, and to many a knightly deed,
 For nothing had he begrudged me of aught that might serve my need.
 Alone came I unto the city, and there at my journey's end
 Did I leave those who had fared thence with me, and alone to Monsalväsch wend.'
 'Now hearken to me, my nephew, when thy father first saw my face
 Of old in Seville's fair city, there did he such likeness trace
 To his wife, fair Herzeleide, that he would me as brother claim,

Tho' never before had he seen me, and secret I held my name.
 And in sooth was I fair to look on, as ever a man might be,
 And my face by no beard was hidden; and sweetly he spake to me,
 When he sought me within my dwelling—Yet many an oath I swore
 And many a word of denial, yet ever he pressed me more
 Till in secret at last I told him, his kinsman was I in truth,
 And greatly did he rejoice him when he knew that his words were sooth!
 'A jewel he gave unto me, and I gave to him at his will;
 Thou sawest my shrine, green shall grass be, yet that shineth greener still,
 'Twas wrought from the stone he gave me—and a better gift he gave,
 For his nephew as squire he left me, Prince Ither, the true and brave.
 His heart such lore had taught him that falsehood his face did flee,
 The King of Cumberland was he, who, thou sayest, was slain by thee.
 Then no longer might we delay us, but we parted, alas! for aye.
 He rode to the land of Baruch, unto Rohas I took my way.
 'In Celli three weeks I battled, and I deemed 'twas enough for fame,
 From Rohas I took my journey and unto Gandein I came,
 ('Twas that town from which first thy grandsire, his name of Gandein did take,
 And many a deed did Ither, and men of his prowess spake.
 And the town lieth near the river, where Graien and Drave they meet,
 And the waters I ween are golden,—there Ither found guerdon sweet,
 For thine aunt, Lamire, she loved him, she was queen of that fair land,
 Gandein of Anjou, her father, he gave it unto her hand.
 And Lamire was her name, but her country shall be Styria to this day—
 And many a land must he traverse who seeketh for knightly fray.'
 'It grieveth me sore for my red squire, men honoured me for his sake,
 And Ither was thy near kinsman tho' of *that* thou small heed didst take!
 Yet God *He* hath not forgotten, and thy deed shall He count for sin,
 And I wot thou shalt first do penance ere thou to His peace shalt win.
 And, weeping, this truth I tell thee, two mortal sins shall lie
 On thine heart, thou hast slain thy kinsman, and thy mother, thro' thee, must die.
 And in sooth shalt thou sore bewail her; in the day thou didst leave her side,
 So great was her love, and faithful, that for grief at thy loss she died.
 Now do thou as here I rede thee, repent thee and pay sin's cost,
 That thy conflict on earth well ended thy soul be not ever lost.'
 Then the host he quoth full kindly, 'Nephew, now say the word,
 Whence hast thou yon gallant charger? Not yet I the tale have heard!'
 'In a joust, Sir Host, did I win it, when I rode from Siguné's cell
 In a gallop I smote the rider and he from the saddle fell,
 And the steed was mine, I rode hence,—from Monsalväsche he came, the knight.'
 Quoth the host, 'Is the man yet living who thus with thee did fight?'
 'Yea, I saw him fly before me, and beside me stood his steed.'
 'Nay, if thou in such wise dost bear thee thou art scant of wit indeed!
 The Grail-knights dost thou rob, and thinkest their friendship thereby to win?'
 'Nay, my uncle, in strife I won it, and he who shall count it sin
 Let him ask how the thing hath chanced thus, 'twas a fair fight we fought, we twain,
 Nor was it for naught that I took it, for first had my steed been slain!'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Who was the maiden who the Grail in her hands did bear,
 Her mantle, that eve, she lent me?'—Quoth the hermit, 'That lady fair
 Is thine aunt, if her robe she lent thee of the loan shalt thou not be vain,
 For surely she deemed that hereafter thou shouldst there as monarch reign.
 And the Grail, and herself, yea and I too, should honour thee as our lord:
 And a gift didst thou take from thine uncle, for he gave thee, I ween, a sword,
 And sin hast thou won in the wearing, since thy lips, which to speak are fain,
 There spake not the mystic question which had loosened his sorrow's chain,

And that sin shalt thou count to the other, for 'tis time that we lay us down.
 Nor couches nor cushions had they, but they laid them upon the ground,
 And for bedding the rushes served them—too humble, I ween, such bed
 For men of a race so noble, yet they deemed they were not ill-spèd.
 Then twice seven days he abode there, with the hermit his lot did share,
 And the herb of the ground was his portion—yet he sought not for better fare,
 Right gladly he bare such hardness that should bring to him food so sweet,
 For as priest did his host absolve him, and as knight gave him counsel meet!
 Quoth Parzival to the hermit, 'Say who shall he be, who lay
 Before the Grail? grey was he, yet his face it was as the day!'
 Spake the host, 'Titurel thou sawest, and he shall grandsire be
 To thy mother, first king and ruler of the Grail and Its knights was he.
 But a sickness hath fallen on him, and he lieth, nor findeth cure,
 Yet his face on the Grail yet looketh, by Its power shall his life endure!
 Nor his countenance changeth colour, and his counsel shall aye be wise—
 In his youth he rode far and joustèd, and won to him valour's prize.'
 'An thou wouldst that thy life be adorned with true worth as thy crown of fame,
 Then ne'er mayst thou hate a woman, but shall honour, as knight, her name,
 For women and priests, thou knowest, unarmèd shall be their hand,
 Yet the blessing of God watcheth o'er them, and as shield round the priest doth stand;
 For the priest, he careth for thee, that thine end may be free from ill,
 So treat thou no priest as a foeman, but serve him with right good will.
 For naught on the earth thou seest that is like to his office high,
 For he speaketh that word unto us which our peace and our life did buy;
 And his hand hath been blest for the holding of the pledge on the altar laid,
 To assure us of sin's forgiveness, and the price for our pardon paid.
 And a priest who from sin doth guard him, and who to his Lord shall give
 Pure heart and pure hand for His service, say, what man shall holier live?'
 Now this day was their day of parting—Trevrezent to our hero spake,
 'Leave thou here thy sins behind thee, God shall me for thy surety take,
 And do thou as I have shown thee, be steadfast and true of heart!'
 Think ye with what grief and sorrow the twain did asunder part.

BOOK X ORGELUSE

Now tell we of strange adventures thro' which joy shall be waxen low,
 And yet pride shall grow the greater, of the twain doth this story show.
 Now the year of truce was ended, when the strife must needs be fought
 Which the Landgrave unto King Arthur at Plimizöl had brought.
 At Schamfanzon he challenged Gawain to meet him at Barbigöl,
 Yet still unavenged was Kingrisein at the hand of Kingrimursel—
 In sooth, Vergulacht, he rode there, and thither had come Gawain,
 And the whole world was 'ware of their kinship nor might strife be betwixt the twain;
 For the murder, Count Eckunât did it, and Gawain must they guiltless hold,
 At rest did they lay their quarrel and friends were those heroes bold.
 Then they parted for both would ride thence, Vergulacht and the knight Gawain,
 Tho' both for the Grail were seeking yet apart would they ride, those twain.
 And many a joust must they ride now, for he who the Grail would see
 Sword in hand must he draw anigh it, and swift must his seeking be!
 Now all that befell to Gawain, the lot of that blameless knight
 Since he rode forth from fair Schamfanzon, if he oft on his way must fight,
 Ye shall ask of those who there saw him, since naught may I tell ye here,
 Yet hearken, and heed the story and the venture that draweth near.
 One morning Gawain rode gaily o'er a grassy plain and green,
 When a shield, in the sun fair shining, with lance-thrust pierced thro' was seen,
 And a charger stood beside it that bare women's riding-gear,

And the bridle and aye the housing were of costly stuff and dear—
And the charger and shield beside it were bound to a linden tree.
Then he thought, 'Who shall be this woman? for valiant I ween is she,
Since she beareth a shield so knightly—If she thinketh with me to fight,
How, then, may I best withstand her? Were it better to here alight?
If too long she wrestle with me perchance I were overthrown,
If hatred or love I shall win here I will fight her on foot alone;
Yea, e'en an she were Kamilla, who before Laurentium fought—
Did she live still to battle with me, as awhile she for honour sought,
I would face her, nor fear her prowess, if here she my foe would be,
Tho' ne'er with a maid have I foughten and the chance seemeth ill to me!'
Battle-hewn was the shield and dented, as Gawain right well espied
The nearer he rode unto it, and pierced with a lance-thrust wide.
Such token by joust is painted, little payment his skill should know
Whose hand erst the shield had fashioned an he thought him to paint it so!
By the trunk of the mighty linden sat a maid on the grass so green,
And sore did she weep and bewail her, and joyless, I wot, her mien.
Then around the tree rode Gawain, and lo! on her knee she bore
A knight, and she wept above him, and grieved with a sorrow sore.
Fair greeting Sir Gawain proffered, she thanked him and bowed her low,
And hoarse was her voice thro' weeping and weakened thro' force of woe.
Then down to the ground sprang Gawain, for the knight he was like to choke,
Since the blood welled within his body, and unto the maid he spoke,
And he asked if the knight were living, or should now in the death-throe be?
And she spake, 'He dieth surely, yet but now alive was he,
God hath sent thee unto my succour, now help me with word and deed,
Such wounds shalt thou oft have looked on, give counsel in this my need!'
'Yea, gladly I'll aid thee, Lady, from death shall thy knight be freed,
And healing I well might win him an there were but at hand a reed.
Thou shalt see him, and hearken to him, nor his life shall be waxen less,
The wound is not all too dangerous, but the blood on his heart doth press.'
Then he stripped from a bough of the linden the bark, and did wind it round,
(No fool he in art of healing,) and he set it unto the wound,
And he bade the maiden suck it till the blood should toward her flow—
And strength came again and hearing, and the voice of the knight they know,
And he looked on Gawain, and he thanked him, and said he should honoured be
In that from his woe he had freed him, and he asked of him, whence came he?
Rode he hither in search of knighthood? 'From far Punturtois I came
In search of such knightly venture as should win for me meed of fame,
Yet sorely must I bewail me for the ill that I here have won,
Sir Knight, an thy senses fail not, 'twere better this way to shun!'
'Such evil I little looked for—'Twas Lischois Giwellius
Who hath wounded me so sorely, and down from my charger thrust:
Fair was the joust and knightly, and he pierced me thro' shield and side,
On her steed this maiden helped me, and hither hath been my guide!'
Then he prayed Gawain to abide there, but he spake, he the place would see
Where such evil had chanced unto him, 'If Logrois thus near shall be,
Perchance I shall yet o'ertake him, he shall answer to me, I trow,
For the deed he hath done, and his reason for vengeance on thee I'll know!'
But the wounded knight spake, 'Not so, for true are the words I say,
And no child's play shall be this journey, great perils beset the way.'
With the band from the maiden's tresses Gawain the wound did bind,
And spake o'er it spells of healing, and he bade them their comfort find
In God, since He cares for all men—With blood was their pathway red,
And crimson the grass besprinkled as a stag had its life-blood shed;

Thus he rode not astray, and in short space did Logrois before him stand—
 A fortress so fair and stately, its praise was in every land.
 'Twas a stately Burg well builded, and it wound the hillside round,
 From afar as a mighty circlet the fortress the summit crowned.
 E'en to-day men this honour give it, its wall shall be stormed in vain,
 For it openeth its gates to no foeman, whose hatred soe'er it gain!
 And a garden lay green around it, 'twas planted with trees so fair,
 Olive, pomegranate, fig-tree, and the vine which its grapes doth bear,
 And gaily they grew and flourished—as Gawain rode that garden bright
 He saw there what wrought him sorrow, yet filled him with all delight!
 A streamlet gushed forth from the hillside, there he saw that which grieved him naught,
 A lady so fair to look on that gladly her face he sought.
 The flower was she of all women, save Kondwiramur alone
 No fairer form nor feature might ever on earth be known.
 So sweet and so bright to look on, so courteous and royal of mien,
 Orgelúsé, was she, of Logrois, and men say that in her was seen
 The charm that desire awakeneth, a balm for the eyes of care,
 For no heart but was drawn toward her, and no mouth but would speak her fair!
 Gawain gave her courteous greeting, and he spake, 'If such grace I Äčain
 That thou wilt I should alight here and awhile at thy side remain,
 If I see that my presence please thee, then sorrow be far from me,
 And joy in its stead dwell with me, no knight e'er might gladder be!
 May I die if the truth I speak not, no woman e'er pleased me more—'
 'It is well, yet methinks I knew that,' then the knight for a space she saw;
 And her sweet lips spake thus unto him, 'Now make of thy praise an end,
 For well might it work thee evil, and I care not that foe or friend,
 Whoever he be that cometh, his judgment on me shall speak,
 For sure if all lips shall praise me my fame it but waxeth weak!
 If the wise praise me e'en as the foolish, the false as the pure and true,
 Then my fame shall be e'en as another's, for the many shall drown the few.
 But my praise do I hold, and but wisdom shall speak that which she doth know—
 Who thou mayst be, Sir Knight, I know not, but 'tis time thou thy way shouldst go!
 'Yet o'er thee will I speak my verdict, if thou dwellest anear my heart
 Then thy dwelling is not *within* it, for *without* shalt thou have thy part.
 And say thou my love desirest, how hast thou rewarding won?
 From the eyes swiftly shoot the glances, yet a sling, when the work is done,
 Smiteth gentler than looks which linger on that which doth sorrow wreak,
 Thy desire is but empty folly, thou shouldst other service seek!
 If thine hand for love's sake shall battle, if adventure hath bidden thee
 By knighthood win love's rewarding, yet thou winnest it not from *me*.
 Nor honour shall be thy portion, but shame shalt thou win alone—
 Now the truth have I spoken unto thee, 'twere best thou shouldst get thee gone!
 Then he quoth, 'Truth thou speakest, Lady, since mine eyes thus mine heart have brought
 In danger, for *they* beheld thee, and thy fetters around me wrought.
 But now, since I be thy captive, I prithee entreat me well,
 Without thine own will hast thou done this, in silence I owned thy spell:
 Thou shalt loose me, or thou shalt bind me, for my will it shall be as thine,
 And gladly all woes I'd suffer if so I might call thee mine!'
 Then she quoth, 'Yea! so take me with thee, if thou countest upon thy gain,
 And the love that shall be thy guerdon, thou shalt mourn it in shame and pain.
 I would know if a man thou shalt be who bravely for me would fight—
 And yet, if thou prize thine honour, thou wilt flee from this strife, Sir Knight!
 And should I yet further rede thee, and thou shouldst to my word say yea,
 Then seek thou elsewhere a lady—For, if thou my love dost pray,

Then joy and fair love's rewarding fall never unto thy share,
But sorrow shall be thy portion if hence I with thee shall fare!
Then answered Gawain, 'Without service, who thinketh true love to win?
An one did so, then here I tell thee, 'twere counted to him for sin,
For true love ever asketh service, yea after as aye before!'
Then she quoth, 'Wilt thou do me service? shame waiteth for thee in store,
Tho' thy life be a life of conflict—No coward as my knight I'll own;
See thou yonder path, 'tis no highway, o'er the bridge doth it wend adown
To the garden, take thou the pathway, for there shalt thou find my steed—
Many folk shalt thou see and shalt hearken, but take thou of their words no heed,
Nor stay for their dance or singing, for tambour, or harp, or flute,
But go thou to my horse, and loose it, that I go not with thee afoot!'
Gawain sprang from off his charger—Yet awhile he bethought him well
Where his steed might abide his coming; by the waters that rippling fell
Was no tree unto which to bind it, and he knew not if he this dame
Might pray, would she hold his charger till once more with her own he came.
Then she quoth, 'I see well what doth vex thee, thine horse shalt thou leave with me,
I will guard it until thy coming tho' small good shall that be to thee!'
Then Gawain took his horse's bridle, 'Now hold this for me, I pray;
'Now indeed art thou dull and foolish,' spake the lady, 'where *thou* dost lay
Thine hand, thinkest thou *I'll* hold it? such deed would beseem me ill!'
Then the love-lorn knight spake gently, for fain would he do her will,
'Further forward I never hold it!' Then she quoth, 'I will hold it there,
And do thou my bidding swiftly, bring my steed and with thee I'll fare;
Then he thought this a joyful hearing, and straightway he left her side,
And over the bridge so narrow to the garden gate he hied;
There saw he many a maiden, and knights so brave and young,
And within that goodly garden so gaily they danced and sung.
And Gawain he was clad so richly, with helmet and harness fair,
That all must bewail his coming for naught but true folk dwelt there.
They cared for that lovely garden, on the greensward they stood or lay,
Or sat 'neath the tents whose shadow was cool 'gainst the sunlight's ray.
Yet they ceased not to bemoan him, and to grieve for his sorrow sore,
Yea, man alike and maiden, and in this wise their plaint they bore,
'Alas! that our lady's cunning will to danger this knight betray!
Alas! that he fain will follow, for she rideth an evil way.'
And many stepped fair towards him, and their arms around him threw,
And bade him a friendly greeting—to an olive tree he drew,
For the steed was fast beneath it, so rich was its gear, I ween,
That the cost of the goodly trappings full thousand marks had been.
And an old knight he stood beside it, well-trimmed was his beard and grey,
And upon a staff he leant him, and salt tears he wept alway.
And the tears, they were shed for Gawain, as he to the steed drew near,
Yet his words of kindly greeting fell soft on the hero's ear.
Then he spake, 'Wilt thou hearken counsel? Lay not on this steed thine hand,
And herein shalt thou show thy wisdom—tho' none here thy will withstand,
Yet, indeed, it were best to leave it! Accurst be our lady queen,
For of many a gallant hero, I wot, she the death hath been!'
Yet Gawain he would do her bidding—'Then, alas! for woe draweth near,'
Spake the knight, and he loosed the halter, 'Twere best not to linger here,
The steed shalt thou take, and shalt leave us, and may He Who made salt the sea,
In the hour of thy need, and thy peril, thy strength and thy counsel be:
And see thou that our lady's beauty, it bringeth thee not to shame,
She is sour in the midst of sweetness, 'mid the sunlight a shower of rain.'
'God grant it,' then quoth Sir Gawain, and straightway he took his leave

Of the old knight and of his comrades and sorely the folk did grieve.
 And the horse went a narrow pathway, and it passed thro' the garden gate,
 And it crossed o'er the bridge, and he found her who there did his coming wait,
 The queen of his heart, and the ruler was she of that land so fair,
 Yet altho' his heart fled towards her yet grief thro' her deed it bare.
 Her hand 'neath her chin soft-rounded had loosened the wimple's fold,
 And flung it aback on her head-gear,—(if a woman ye thus behold,
 Know ye that for strife she longeth and mischief she hath in mind)—
 Would ye know how else she had robbed her ye naught in my song shall find,
 For how might I tell her raiment and name ye her robes aright,
 When mine eyes, on her fair face gazing, saw naught but her beauty bright?
 As Gawain drew near the lady, she hailed him with scornful mien,
 'Now welcome, thou goose! for of all men most foolish art thou, I ween,
 All too bent shalt thou be on my service, wert thou wise thou wouldst let it be—'
 Then he quoth, 'Yet shalt thou be gracious who now art so wroth with me,
 For so harshly thou dost chastise me thou in honour must make it good,
 And my hand shall be fain to serve thee till thou winnest a milder mood;
 Ask thou what of me thou wilt—Shall I lift thee upon thy steed?'
 But she quoth, 'I will no such service, for methinks all too great such meed
 For a hand that is yet unproven—Ask thou for a lesser grace!'
 On the flowery sward she turned her, and she looked not on Gawain's face,
 But she laid her hand on the bridle, and she light to the saddle sprung,
 And she bade him to ride before her, and she spake with a mocking tongue,
 'Now indeed would it be great pity did I stray from so brave a knight,
 By God's grace will we keep together, so ride thou within my sight!'
 Now he who my rede would follow his peace shall he hold awhile,
 Lest he speak but the word of folly, till he know if she wrought of guile,
 For as yet the truth ye know not, nor the thing that was in her heart.
 And were it the time for vengeance, then I too might bear my part,
 And take from this lady payment for the wrong she hath done Gawain;
 Nor of that she shall do hereafter shall aught unavenged remain.
 But Orgelúsé, that lovely lady, bare herself in no friendly wise,
 For she rode in the track of Gawain, and so wrathful, I ween, her guise
 That were I in the stead of Gawain little comfort my soul might take
 That she from my care would free me, and with fair love atonement make.
 Then they rode on an open moorland, and a herb did Sir Gawain see
 Whose root had the power of healing, and down to the ground sprang he,
 And dug up the root, and swiftly he sprang on his steed again.
 And the lady she looked upon him, and she spake in a mocking vein,
 'Now in sooth if this my companion can at one-while be leech and knight,
 For starvation he need not fear him if his salve-box he bear aright!'
 Quoth Gawain, 'Neath a mighty linden a wounded knight I saw,
 Methinks, if again I find him, this herb shall the poison draw
 From his wounds, and new strength may give him!' She spake, 'Now I well were fain
 To look on thy skill, for who knoweth what knowledge I thence may gain!'
 Now a squire he rode swift behind them, 'twas the lady's messenger,
 Fain was he to do her bidding—As the horse-hoofs they drew anear
 Gawain would await his coming, and his steed for a space he held,
 Yet he deemed him he saw a monster when first he the squire beheld,
 For Malcréature did they call him, and Kondrie was his sister fair,
 And e'en such a face as the sister, I ween, did the brother bear.
 From his mouth, as the tusks of a wild-boar, stood the teeth out to left and right,
 Unlike was his face to a man's face, and fearful in all men's sight.
 And the locks of his hair were shorter than those which from Kondrie hung
 Adown on her mule, stiff as bristles, and sharp, from his head they sprung.

And beside the river Ganges, in the land of Tribalibot,
 Dwell such folk, if awhile ye hearken ye shall learn how befell their lot.
 Now Adam, of all men father, from God did he learn such skill,
 All beasts, wild and tame, he knew them, and he namèd them at his will.
 And he knew the stars and their pathway, as they circle the silent sky,
 And the power of the seven planets, how they rule men from heaven high,
 And he knew of all roots the virtue, and the ill that was theirs of yore—
 When his children were grown to manhood, and daughters and sons they bore,
 From evil desires he warned them; and his daughters he oft did rede
 Of certain roots to beware them, that wrought ill with the human seed,
 And would change their face, and their aspect, and dishonoured the race should be;
 And he spake, 'Then shall we be other than erst God did fashion me,
 And therefore do ye, my children, give heed to the words I say,
 Nor be blind to your bliss, lest *your* children they wander too far astray.'
 But the women, they did as women, in forbidden ways they went,
 And they wrought out the lust and the evil on which their desire was bent,
 And the shape of men was changèd, such rewarding their fault must win,
 And tho' firm stood the will of Adam yet sorely he mourned their sin—
 Now the fair Queen Sekundillé, her body, her crown, and land,
 Feirefis had won as his guerdon by the power of his knightly hand,
 And there, in her far-off kingdom (no lie is the tale I tell)
 Full many of this strange people since the days that are gone do dwell,
 And their faces are ill to look on, and the birth-marks are strange they bear.
 And once of the Grail men told her, and Anfortas' kingdom fair,
 That on earth was naught like to his riches, and a marvel she thought his land—
 (And the waters within her kingdom bare jewels instead of sand,
 And many a golden mountain shall rear its crest on high.)
 And the queen she thought, 'How may I win speech of his majesty,
 Who ruleth the Grail?' she bethought her, and rich presents she sent the king,
 Of jewels fair, and beside them, they should to his kingdom bring
 Of this folk, so strange to look on, the twain of whom now I tell,
 Kondrie and the squire, her brother—and in this wise the chance befell
 (Much treasure beside she sent him whose cost might of none be told,)
 That Anfortas, the gentle monarch, who was courteous as he was bold,
 For the love he bare Orgeluse sent this squire unto her grace,
 By the sin and the lust of women set apart from the human race!
 Now this son of the herbs and the planets loud mocked at the gallant knight,
 Who, courteous, would wait his coming; no charger he rode of might,
 But a mare so feint and feeble and halting in every limb,
 And oft to the ground it stumbled 'neath its rider so harsh and grim.
 I wot well e'en Dame Jeschuté rode a better steed that day
 When Parzival's hand avenged her, and her shaming was put away!
 The squire he looked well upon Gawain, and thus in his wrath he spake,
 'If thou be a *knight*, I think me, and my lady with thee wilt take
 Thou shalt sorely repent the journey—A fool thou in truth must be,
 And such peril shall be thy guerdon as winneth great praise to thee,
 If so be that thou canst withstand it—Yet, if but a *servant* thou,
 Of buffets and blows, I think me, full soon wilt thou have enow!'
 Then out quoth Gawain, 'My knighthood such chastisement ne'er might feel,
 'Tis good but for worthless youngsters who shrink from the touch of steel;
 But *I* hold me free of such insults, and e'en if it so shall be
 That thou and this lovely lady your mock'ry shall pour on me,
 Then *one* sure shall taste my vengeance, nor think thou that I wax wroth
 For ill tho' thou be to look on I hold thee but light in troth!'
 With that by the hair he gripped him, and he swung him from off his horse,

The squire glared wrathful on him, and his bristles, so sharp and coarse,
 Took vengeance sore on Gawain, his hand did they cut and tear
 Till the blood dripped crimson from it—then loud laughed the lady fair,
 'Now in sooth this is good to look on, to see ye twain in wrath!'

So rode the twain, the squire's horse came halting upon their path.
 So came they unto the linden where the wounded knight they found,
 On his side the herb of healing the hand of Gawain bound;
 Quoth the knight, 'Now, how went it with thee since first thou didst find me here?
 Thou ledest with thee a lady who plotteth thine ill, I fear!
 'Tis thro' her I so sore am wounded; at the Perilous Ford, I ween,
 Did she force such a joust upon me as well-nigh my death had been!
 So, if thou thy life now lovest, I warn thee to let her be,
 And turn thee aside, nor ride with her, but warning to take by me—
 And yet may my wounds be healèd, if rest for awhile I gain,
 And, Sir Knight, thereto canst thou help me?' 'That will I,' quoth knight Gawain.
 Then the wounded knight spake further, 'A spital shall stand near by,
 And if I but now might reach it for awhile I in peace might lie,
 Thou seest my lady's palfrey, it can carry, methinks, the twain
 If she rideth afore, I behind her, so help me its back to gain.'
 From the bough of the mighty linden Sir Gawain he loosed the steed,
 And the bridle he took that the palfrey he might to the lady lead—
 'Away from me!' cried the sick man, 'thou treadest on me I trow!'

Then he led it apart, and the lady she followed so soft and slow,
 For she knew what her lord did purpose; as the maid to her horse he swung,
 Up started the knight, and swiftly on the charger of Gawain sprung!
 And, methinks, an ill deed he did there—With his lady he rode away,
 And I ween that with sin was tainted the prize that he won that day!
 Then sore did Gawain bemoan him, but the lady laughed loud and clear;
 (And, were it a jest, he thought him such mirth were unfitting here,)

As his charger was taken from him her sweet lips in this wise spake,
 'First wert thou a *knight*, then, in short space, I thee for a *leech* must take,
 Now art thou become my *footman*! yet thou shouldst in no wise despair,
 Such skill sure should bring thee comfort! Wouldst thou *still* in my favours share?'

'Yea, Lady,' then quoth Sir Gawain, 'an I might thy favor hold,
 The whole earth hath nothing fairer were the tale of its riches told;
 And of crownèd heads, and uncrownèd, of all who may joyful win
 The highest meed of glory, did they bid me to share therein,
 Yet still my heart would rede me to count all such gain as naught
 If thy love were but weighed against it, such bliss had thy favour brought!
 If thy love may not be my guerdon then a swift sad death I'll die,
 'Tis thine own this thing that thou scornest when thou dealest thus mockingly.
 Tho' a free man born thou shalt hold me thy vassal, if such thy will,
 Call me knight, or slave, or servant, the *name* it shall please me still!
 Yet, I think me, thou doest not rightly—When my service thou thus wilt shame
 Thou drawest down sin upon thee, and thou shamest thine own fair fame.
 If my service doth bring me honour thou hast naught withal to scorn,
 And such words shall but ill beseem thee tho' they lightly by me be borne!'

Then back rode the knight, sore wounded, and he quoth, 'Is it thou, Gawain?
 For that which erewhile I owed thee here dost thou full payment gain,
 Since thine hand in bitter conflict, me, thy foeman, did prisoner make
 And unto thine uncle Arthur thou didst me thy captive take,
 And four weeks long must I dwell there, and four weeks long I fed
 With the dogs—I shall ne'er forget it till the days of my life be sped!'

Then he quoth, 'Is it thou, O Urian? If now thou art wroth with me,
 Yet guiltless am I, the king's favour at that time I won for thee,

For thy folly so far betrayed thee that men spake thee an outcast knight,
 And thy shield it was taken from thee, and forfeit thy name and right;
 Since thou ill didst entreat a maiden, and the peace of the land didst break,
 With a rope had the king repaid thee, but to him for thy life I spake!
 'Howe'er that might be, here thou standest, and the proverb thou well mayst know,
 "Who saveth the life of another, that other shall have for foe."
 And I do as a wise man doeth—"Tis better a child should weep
 Than a full-grown man, and bearded,—this charger mine hand shall keep!"
 Then he spurred him amain, and he rode thence, as fast as his steed might fly,
 And wroth was Gawain at his dealing, and he spake out right angrily;
 'Now it fell out in this wise, Lady, King Arthur his court did hold
 At Dianadron, and with him rode many a Breton bold.
 Then as messenger to his kingdom a maiden must take her way,
 And this fool, for venture seeking, he crossed her path that day,
 And both to the land were strangers—He burnt with unholy fire,
 And fierce with the maid he wrestled till he bent her to his desire.
 As she cried for help we heard her—then the king "To arms" did call,
 In a wood the thing had chanced thus, thither rode we one and all,
 And I rode of all the foremost, and I saw the sinner's track,
 And I made him perforce my captive, and to Arthur I brought him back.'
 'And the maiden she rode beside us, and sorely did she bemoan
 That to *force* she must yield the guerdon that to *service* was due alone.
 Of her maidenhood had he robbed her—Yet but lowly his fame shall stand
 Who vaunteth himself the victor o'er a woman's unarmed hand—
 And wrathful, I ween, was King Arthur, and he spake, 'Ye my servants true,
 Ye shall hold this deed for accursèd, and the day of its doing rue.
 Alas! for the woful dawning and the light that this thing hath seen,
 Alas! that I here am ruler, for the judgment is mine, I ween!'

And he spake to the weeping maiden, 'Hast thou wisdom, thy cause then plead.'
 She spake fearless, e'en as he bade her, and the knights they must list her rede.
 'Then Prince Urian of Punturtois stood before the Breton king,
 And against his life and his honour, her plaint did the maiden bring,
 And she spake so that all might hear her, and with weeping words did pray
 The king, for the sake of women, her shaming to put away.
 And she prayed by the honour of women, and by the Round Table's fame,
 And the right which as message-bearer she thought of all men to claim,
 If he sat there that day for judgment he should judge her with judgment true,
 And avenge her of this dishonour which her soul must for ever rue.
 And she prayed they would do her justice, those knights of the Table Round,
 Since in sooth she had lost a treasure which might never again be found,
 Her maidenhood fair and unstained! Then all men, with one accord,
 Spake him guilty, and for his judgment called loudly upon their lord!
 'Then an advocate spake for the captive, (Small honour was his I trow.)
 And he spake as he might in his favour, yet it went with him ill enow,
 For of life and of honour forfeit did they judge him, the headsman's sword
 Should ne'er be his death, but a halter should they twine him of hempen cord.
 Then loud in his woe he prayed me, since he yielded him to mine hand,
 For mine honour should sure be stained if wrought were the king's command.
 Then I prayed of the weeping maiden, since she saw how that I in fight
 Had avenged upon him her shaming, to pardon the traitor knight.
 For sure 'twas the spell of her beauty that had wrought upon him for sin,
 And the love of her form so shapely—"For aye if a knight doth win
 Sore peril for love of a woman, she should aid him, and hear his prayer,
 So I prithee to cease thine anger, and have pity on his despair."
 'Then the king and his men I prayed them, by what service I e'er had done,

They should loose me from stain of dishonour which I by his death had won,
 And the knight should live, as I sware him.—Then the lady, his gracious queen,
 I prayed by the bond of kinship, since my friend she hath ever been,
 (From my childhood, King Arthur reared me and my love doth toward them flow,
 That she of her kindness help me—as I asked, it was even so,
 For she drew on one side the maiden, and she spake to her soft and kind,
 And it was thro' the queen, I wot me, that the knight did his pardon find.
 Thus free from his guilt they spake him, yet his sin must he sorely rue,
 For the life that was granted to him stern penance he needs must do.
 With the hounds of the chase and the house-dogs from one trough he needs must eat
 For the space of four weeks, thus the maiden found avenging as it was meet!'
 'For this cause is he wroth with me, Lady'—'Yet his judgment it went astray,
 If my love ne'er shall be thy guerdon, in such wise I'll his deed repay
 That ere he shall leave my kingdom he shall count it to him for shame!
 Since King Arthur avenged not the evil that was wrought on that maid's fair fame
 It falleth unto mine office, and judge am I o'er ye twain,
 Tho' who ye may be I know not, yet I to this task am fain!
 And well shall he be chastised for the wrong that he did the maid,
 Not for *thine*, for I ween such evil is better by blows repaid.'
 To the mare now Sir Gawain turned him, and lightly he caught the rein,
 And the squire he followed after, and the lady she spake again,
 And in Arabic spake she to him, and she gave him to know her will—
 Now hearken unto my story, how Sir Gawain he fared but ill:
 Then Malcréature, he left them—and Gawain his horse beheld,
 Too feeble it was for battle, the squire, as his way he held
 Down the hill, from the peasant-owner had taken the sorry steed,
 And Gawain for his charger must have it, tho' but ill it might serve his need.
 In mocking and hatred spake she, 'Wilt still ride upon thy way?'
 Quoth Gawain, 'I will take my journey e'en in such wise as thou shalt say.'
 She quoth, 'Wilt abide my counsel? It shall reach thee I ween too late!'
 Quoth he, 'Yet for that will I serve thee, tho' o'er-long I thy rede shall wait!'
 Quoth she, 'Then a fool I think thee, for unless thou shalt leave this mind,
 Then sorrow instead of gladness and repentance for joy thou'lt find!'
 Then he quoth, of her love desirous, 'Yet thy servant I still abide,
 If joy be my lot or sorrow, be thy love and thy will my guide.
 Since thy love laid its spell upon me in thy bidding my law I see,
 And ahorse or afoot I'll follow, I care not where'er it be!'
 So stood he beside the lady, and awhile he beheld the mare,
 Who to joust with such steed had ridden his gold were o'er-keen to spare!
 For the stirrups of hemp were twisted, and ne'er had this gallant knight
 Such saddle, I ween, bestridden, it would serve him but ill for fight.
 For e'en as he looked upon it, he thought, 'If on *that* I ride,
 The girths sure will break asunder, nor the saddle my weight abide!'
 And so weak was the steed and ill-shapen, had one dared on its back to leap
 Of a sooth would the back have broken—On foot he the road must keep!
 And in this guise he took his journey: the horse by the rein he held,
 And his spear and his shield he carried; and the lady his grief beheld,
 And she mocked him with ringing laughter, fain was she to work him woe—
 Then his shield on the mare he fastened, and she spake, 'In such guise wouldst go,
 And carry thy wares thro' my kingdom? A strange lot is mine, I ween,
 Since *footman*, and *leech*, and *merchant* in turn hath my comrade been!
 Of the toll hadst thou best beware thee, or else, as thou goest thy way,
 It may chance they who take the toll here on thy merchandise hands may lay!
 And tho' sharp, I ween, was her mocking yet her words was he fain to hear,
 Nor rued he the bitter speeches that rang sweet to his longing ear.

And as ever his eyes beheld her his sorrow it fled away,
For fair was she to his thinking as blossoms in month of May!
A delight of the eyes, and heart-sorrow, his gain and his loss was she,
And languishing joy did she quicken—Her freeman and captive he!
This hath many a master taught me, that Amor, and Cupid too,
And Venus, of both the mother, make all men their deeds to rue;
For with darts and with fire they kindle desire in the longing heart,
But such love seemeth me but evil that is lighted by torch or dart.
And the true heart it loveth ever, be its guerdon or joy or woe,
And in honour the love is rooted which alone shall abiding know!
'Gainst me have thy darts, O Cupid! I ween ever missed their mark,
Nor Amor with spear hath smote me, nor fell on my heart a spark
From the torch of thy mother Venus—Tho' love 'neath your rule shall be,
If love be my lot, not from *passion* but from *faith* shall it bloom for me!
And if I with wit and wisdom 'gainst love's spells might a hero aid,
Gawain had I gladly aided, nor asked that I be repaid.
And yet no shame need he think it if love's fetters him captive hold,
And if he of love be vanquished, for her captives are aye the bold.
And yet so strong was he ever, and so knightly, to face the foe,
That 'tis pity so brave a hero by a *woman* should be laid low!
Now well let us gaze upon thee, thou power which true love doth wield,
Such joy hast thou taken from us that barren and reft the field,
And thou makest a road of sorrow across it, both long and wide,
And if thy goal had been other than the high heart I would not chide.
For folly methinks and lightness love all too old shall be,
Or shall we to childhood reckon the evil love worketh free?
For better are ways unseemly in youth, than if age forget
Its wisdom—much ill love worketh, unto which shall the blame be set?
For the mind of youth ever wavers, and changeth as changing winds,
And if love shall be thus unsteadfast, little praise may she hope to find.
Nay, better shall be my counsel, for the *wise* praise true love alone;
Yea, and maiden and man shall join me, and all who love's power have known.
When true love unto true love answereth, undarkened by thought of guile,
And it vexeth them not that love turneth the key on their heart awhile,
For they fear not nor think of wavering, then high as the heaven above
O'er the earth, o'er the love that changeth, is such true and steadfast love.
Yet, gladly as I would free him, to Frau Minne Gawain must bow,
And his joy shall awhile be darkened—Small profit my words, I trow,
And the wisdom I fain had taught him, for no man may love withstand,
And love alone giveth wisdom, and nerveth with strength the hand!
And to Gawain she gave this penance, afoot must he wend his way
While his lady she rode beside him—To a woodland they came alway,
And he led the steed to a tree-trunk, and the shield that awhile it bare
He hung round his neck as befitting, and lightly bestrode the mare,
And scarcely the steed might bear him—Then they came to a builded land,
And a castle so fair and stately he saw there before him stand,
And his heart and his eyes bare witness no fortress was like this hall,
So knightly and fair the palace, and so countless its turrets tall.
And many a maiden looked forth from its casements, he thought to see
Four hundred and more, o'er all others, I ween, *four* might fairest be.
Then the lady and her companion they rode a well-trodden road
To a water whose waves ran swiftly, and ships sailed the flood so broad.
By the landing there lay a meadow, where men jousts were wont to ride,
And the towers of that stately castle rose fair on the further side.

Then Gawain, that gallant hero, saw a knight who rode swift and near,
 As one who for combat lusted, and he spared not or shield or spear.
 Quoth the lady, fair Orgelúsé, and haughty her tone and proud,
 'In what else thou mayst gainsay me in this be my truth allowed,
 For other I ne'er have told thee save that shame shall thy portion be,
 Now here, if thou canst, defend thee, since no better is left to thee.
 Methinks he who cometh hither shall fell thee beneath his thrust—
 If thy garments perchance be riven, and thou bitest, ashamed, the dust,
 Then those women above shall mourn thee, who look for some deed of fame,
 Seest thou how they gaze from the lattice? How, then, if they see thy shame?'
 Then the boatman across the water he came at the lady's will,
 From the shore to the boat she stepped there, and Gawain it but pleased him ill;
 For, mocking, fair Orgelúsé spake thus to the gallant knight,
 'Thou com'st not with me, I leave thee on this shore as a pledge for fight!'

Then sadly his voice rang after, 'Say, Lady, wilt leave me so?
 Shall I never again behold thee?' Then she spake, 'I would have thee know
 If victory be thy portion thou shalt look on my face again,
 Yet but small is the chance I think me.' So sailed she from knight Gawain.
 Then up rode Lischois Giwellius, 'twere a lie if I said he *flew*,
 And yet little other did he for the earth scarce his footprints knew.
 And for this must I praise the charger, who the greensward with such swift feet
 Had trodden—Gawain bethought him how he best might his foeman meet;
 He thought, 'Should I here await him afoot, or this steed bestride?
 If his horse's speed he check not he surely o'er me will ride,
 And this fate must o'ertake his charger, to fall o'er my fallen steed;
 But, if he for combat lusteth, afoot on this flowery mead
 Will I face him and give him battle, since battle he doth desire,
 Tho' never I win her favour who hath brought on me need so dire.'

Fight they must, and they fought as heroes, he who came and he who did wait,
 For jousting he made him ready, and the lance-point Gawain held straight,
 And he rested it on the saddle, (for thus did he counsel take,)

Then e'en as the joust was ridden the spears did in splinters break,
 And the knights, the one as the other, they fell in that goodly fray,
 For the better charger stumbled and by Gawain its rider lay.
 Then the twain to their feet upspringing their swords from the scabbard drew,
 Since alike they were keen for combat, and their shields in pieces flew,
 For each hewed at the shield of the other till a hand's breadth alone, I ween,
 They held, for the pledge of conflict the shield it hath ever been.
 Flashed the sword-blades, fire sprang from the helmets, a venture brave I trow
 Was his who should here be victor, tho' stern conflict he first must know.
 Long space did they fight, those heroes, on the flowery meadow wide,
 And as smiths, who all day have laboured, as it weareth to eventide
 Grow faint with their toil and weary with the mighty blows they smite,
 So weary and faint were those heroes who here did for honour fight.
 But for this none methinks shall praise them, unwise do I hold the twain,
 No cause had they here for battle, 'twas fame that they thought to gain;
 And strangers unto each other, each other's life they sought,
 And yet, had they made confession, each owed to the other naught!

Now Gawain was a gallant wrestler, and his foe to the ground would bring
 If in spite of the sword he might grip him, and let but the mighty ring
 Of his arms his foeman circle, he forced him where'er he would.
 Now must he with force defend him, and he fought as a hero good,
 And his courage waxed ever higher, and the youth in his arms he caught,
 And he bare him to earth beneath him tho' e'en as a man he fought.
 And he quoth, 'Wilt thou live, thou hero, thou must yield thee unto mine hand!'

Yet Lischois, he was all unready to follow so stern command;
 For never his pledge had he given, and he deemed it a wondrous thing
 That the hand of a knight should o'erthrow him, and him in such peril bring
 That against his will he must yield him, who had ever the victor been,
 For in sooth full many a combat his foeman o'erthrown had seen.
 Full oft he from them had taken what he cared not to give again,
 Nay, rather his life would he forfeit; and he spake unto knight Gawain,
 And he said, 'Let what would befall him, his pledge to no man he'd give;
 Nay, death would he rather suffer, since no longer he cared to live!
 Then sadly, he spake, the vanquished, 'Thou hero, is victory thine?
 So long as God bare me favour such honour was ever mine;
 But now hath my fame an ending, and thy right hand hath laid me low,
 And if maiden and man must hearken to the tale of my overthrow
 Whose glory once rose to the heaven, then death shall my portion be
 Ere my kinsmen shall hear the story, and shall sorrow and mourn for me!
 Yet Gawain still prayed him yield him, but his will and his mind were so
 That he prayed God would rather take him, or slay him by this his foe.
 Thought Gawain, 'I am loth to kill him, if he swear but to do my will
 Unharm'd he may go'—yet the young knight withheld him his promise still.
 Then, ere he his hand had given, the hero he bade him rise,
 On the flowery mead they sat them: then Gawain he bethought him wise,
 (For his sorry steed it vexed him) the horse of his vanquished foe
 With spur and with rein would he test there, if 'twere good for his need or no.
 ('Twas armed as beseemed a warhorse, and the covering was fair to see,
 Of velvet and silk was it fashioned, what trapping might better be?)
 Since the venture such prize had brought him, who should hinder him in his need
 If for his own use he took it? so he vaulted upon the steed:
 And he joyed in the free, swift movement, and he cried, 'Now, how shall this be?
 Of a sooth it is thou, Gringuljet, that false Urian stole from me.
He knoweth best how he took it, and shameful I count his deed.
 Now, who thus for battle armed thee, since thou art of a truth my steed?
 Sure 'tis God who hath sent thee to me, and this fair gift shall end my woe.'
 Then he sprang to the ground, and he sought him the token he well might know,
 On its shoulder the Grail-Dove branded—In a joust did Lâhelein slay
 Its rider, the knight of Prienlaskors, and the charger he bare away.
 Then Orilus was its master, and he gave it to knight Gawain
 On Plimizöl's shore—greatly joyed he when the charger he won again.
 Blithe was he, and high of courage, who awhile was sad and sore,
 Yet love unto ruth constrained him, and the service so true he bore
 To the lady who yet would shame him, and his thoughts ever toward her flew.
 Then up sprang proud Lischois lightly, and his good sword he gripped anew,
 For it lay where Gawain had cast it when he wrested it from his hand:
 And the ladies look down on the heroes, as for combat once more they stand.
 The shields were so hacked and riven that the knights they must cast them by,
 And, shieldless, to strife betake them, and they bare them right gallantly.
 And a crowd of fair maidens o'er them from the palace window saw
 The strife that below was foughten: and fierce anger awoke once more,
 For too nobly born I wot me was each man that he might brook
 That his fame should be lightly yielded, and maids on his shaming look.
 And helmet and sword were smitten, for shields 'gainst cold death were they,
 He who saw the heroes strive there had mourned for their toil that day.
 Lischois Giwellius bare him, that fair youth, as knight so brave,
 True courage, and deeds undaunted, the counsel his high heart gave.
 And many a swift blow dealt he, as quick on Gawain he sprung,
 And lightly avoided from him, and his blade round his head he swung.

But Gawain stood firm and undaunted, and he thought him, 'Now, let me hold
 Thee once in mine arms, I'll repay thee thy dealings, thou hero bold!'

And fiery sparks might ye look on, and the flash of the glittering blade
 Well wielded by hand of hero—Nor one in his station stayed,
 For they pressed each one on the other, backward, forward, to either side,
 Yet this conflict so fierce, I wot me, did ne'er of revenge betide,
 And no hatred they bare to each other—Then the arms of Gawain at last
 He clasped round his gallant foeman, and the knight to the ground he cast.
 And I think, an I friendship sware here, I would shrink from such fond embrace,
 E'en tho' brotherhood it were sealing—Nor with ye would such clasp find grace!
 Then Gawain he bade him yield him, yet Lischois, who against his will
 Had striven when first he felled him, was all unready still.
 And he quoth, 'Wherefore thus delay thee, 'tis needless, take thou my life,
 For better to die than to yield me—Since I wot well that in this strife
 The fame that was mine aforetime hath vanished beneath thy blow,
 Of God must I be accursèd, since my glory such goal doth know!
 For the love of fair Orgelusé have I served her with knightly hand,
 And many a knight have I felled here, for none might my arm withstand.
 Now shalt thou be heir to my glory, for it falleth to thee of right
 If thou, who my fame hath ended, here endeth my life, Sir Knight.'
 But King Lot's son he thought in this wise, 'To this deed have I little mind,
 My name, it shall gain small honour if this man here his death shall find,
 If for no sin of his I slay him, who is true and valiant knight—
 'Twas *her* love that spurred him 'gainst me, for whose favour I too would fight;
 'Tis her beauty that doth constrain me, 'tis she that doth work me woe,
 Then why not, for the sake of my lady, show mercy to this my foe?
 If perchance for mine own I win her, if mine own such bliss may be,
 Then *he* cannot take her from me since stronger am I than he!
 And if o'er our strife she watcheth, then she must of a surety own
 That I, who for love would serve her, true service and good have shown!'

Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'I were loth thy life to take,
 But hence will I let thee, scatheless, for fair Orgelusé's sake!'

Weary were they, small wonder, then the fallen knight arose,
 And down on the grassy meadow apart sat those gallant foes.
 Then the master boatman stepped forth from the water unto the land,
 And a grey and yearling falcon he carried upon his hand.
 This right was his o'er the meadow, who joustèd upon the plain,
 The charger of him who was vanquished he did as his tribute gain.
 From his hand, who was there the victor, should he take, as a gift, the steed,
 And bowing, thank him fairly, nor stint of his praise the meed.
 And such payment he oft had taken on the flowery meadow green,
 Nor otherwise had his living; save at whiles, when such chance had been,
 That a bird in his falcon's clutches had fluttered in grief and pain.
 Nor plough drave he thro' those furrows, for enough did he deem his gain.
 And son of a folk so knightly was he born to a knight's estate,
 And courteous, I ween, his bearing who there on Gawain did wait.
 So came he unto the hero, and with courteous word and fair
 He prayed of his hand the tribute, and the steed that should be his share.
 Quoth Gawain, the gallant hero, 'No merchant methinks I be
 To pay here or toll or tribute, from such tax do I hold me free!'

Then he spake out, the master boatman, 'Sir Knight, since full many a maid
 Hath seen thee stand here the victor, by *thee* be my tribute paid.
 My right o'er the plain must thou own here, in knightly joust thine hand
 Hath won for mine own this charger; nor thy fame shall the lower stand,
 For he, whom thine hand o'erthrew here, the world with his praises rung,

And with truth, unto this day's dawning, have men of his glory sung;
 But now he of God is stricken, and his joy hath an ending found,
 But *thou*, in his stead, I think me, with honour and fame art crowned!
 Quoth Gawain, 'He first o'erthrew me, and I but that deed repaid.
 If tribute for joust be due here, by *him* be that tribute paid!
 Look well on this mare, he won it, thou canst take it if such thy will.
 The charger that standeth by me, as mine own will I claim it still—
 Tho' never a steed be thy portion, on *that* steed I hence will go,
 Thou speakest of *right*, wouldst thou take it, then first I would have thee know
 (Yea, thou thyself wilt own it) 'tis unfitting I take my way
 Afoot, and right sore 'twould grieve me if that charger were thine alway!
 For to-day in the early morning it was *mine* without doubt or fear,
 And childish thou art if thou thinkest thus lightly to win it here!
 'Twas Duke Orilus, the Burgundian, who gave me the steed of old,
 Which Urian stole this morning, and the tale thou for truth shalt hold.
 And the foal of a mule shalt thou win thee ere thy prize be this steed of mine—
 Yet a fair gift in sooth will I give thee, for the *steed* shall the *knight* be thine,
 Thou accountest him honour-worthy—if he say thee or yea or nay,
 And if well or ill it doth please him I abide by my word alway.'
 Then joyful I ween was the boatman, and with smiling lips he spake,
 'Now methinks that a gift so costly it hath ne'er been my lot to take,
 And I deem myself all unworthy—Yet, Sir Knight, be he mine indeed,
 Then the guerdon is more than I asked for and o'er my deserts my meed.
 For his praises they rang so clearly that five hundred steeds all told,
 Swift-footed and strong for battle, too low for his price I'd hold!
 If a rich man thou thus wilt make me, then this thing shalt thou do for me,
 To my boat shalt thou captive bring him, that I hold him as pledge from thee.'
 King Lot's son he spake in answer, 'Yea this will I do, and more,
 To thy boat first, and then from out it will I lead him within thy door,
 And there will I yield him captive'—'And there will I welcome thee!'
 Spake the boatman, and low he bowed him, and thanks spake he fair and free.
 And he quoth, 'Dear my lord and master, if it please thee to be my guest,
 And abide in my house till the morning, then softly I'll bid thee rest.
 Nor won boatman e'er higher honour, and blest be the eventide
 That seeth a knight so gallant 'neath the shade of my roof-tree bide.'
 Then out quoth Gawain, 'That will I, for in truth I had prayed this grace,
 For weary am I with battle, and fain would I rest a space.
 She who to this sorrow led me, her sweetness she maketh sour,
 And heart's joy shall be dear to purchase, and sorrow doth crown each hour,
 And the guerdon for this her service unlike to herself shall be—
 Alas! I had found a treasure, yet but loss hath it brought to me!
 And one breast thro' that loss now sinketh that awhile swelled so proud and high,
 When joy was from God my portion, for a heart did beneath it lie.
 Now I think me that heart hath vanished, and where shall I comfort seek?
 Shall I helpless abide that Frau Minne her wrath upon me shall wreak?
 Yea, had she the heart of a woman she would give me my joy again
 Who maketh her sweetness bitter, and turneth my bliss to pain!'
 Then the boatman he heard how he wrestled with sorrow, by love constrained,
 And he quoth, 'So is here the custom, in the forest as on the plain,
 As far as Klingsor ruleth, be he coward or valiant knight,
 "Sad to day, to-morrow joyful," So it goeth for peace or fight.
 Perchance the truth thou knowst not? This land is a wonder-land,
 And ever by day and by night-time if good luck shall not aid thine hand
 Little good may thy manhood do thee! See thou how the sun sinks low,
 I think me, Sir Knight, it were better that we should to my vessel go!'

Then Lischois he was led by Gawain, and never a word he spake,
 And the boatman he followed after and the steed by its rein did take.
 So sailed they across the water, and they came to the further coast,
 And the boatman he prayed Sir Gawain, 'Be thou in mine house the host.'
 And so rich was the house and stately, that scarce in King Arthur's land,
 E'en in Nantes that noble city, did a fairer dwelling stand.
 And he led Lischois thro' the doorway, and he gave him unto the care
 Of the host and his folk—Then the boatman spake thus to his daughter fair,
 'Fair times and a goodly lodging be the lot of this noble knight
 Who standeth here, go thou with him, for I deem me it shall be right,
 And tend him as best shall seem thee, nor stint thou in aught thy care,
 For great good hath he brought unto us, and 'tis meet he thy grace should share!'
 To his son's care he gave the charger—Then the maiden her sire's behest
 Fulfilled as right well became her, for she led the noble guest
 To a chamber fair, where the flooring was hid 'neath a carpet green
 Of rushes and fresh-plucked blossoms, as the way of the land had been.
 There the gentle maid unarmed him—quoth Gawain, 'God show grace to thee,
 For had not thy sire thus bade thee too great were thy care for me!'
 And she quoth, 'For my father's bidding I do not this deed, Sir Knight,
 But rather that this my service may find favour before thy sight.'
 Then a squire, the host's son, must bear there soft cushions, a goodly store,
 And along the wall he laid them, and over against the door.
 And a carpet he spread before them that Gawain he might seat him there;
 And as one who knew well his office a cushion so rich he bare,
 With a covering of crimson sendal, that down on the couch he laid;
 And a seat like unto the other for the host he beside it made.
 Came another squire and he carried fresh linen the board to spread,
 (For thus gave the host commandment,) and he bare with the linen bread.
 And the hostess she followed after, and she looked well upon Gawain,
 And she gave him a heartfelt greeting, and she spake, 'Now such grace we gain
 From thine hand we are rich henceforward as we never have been before,
 Sir Knight, sure our good luck waketh since such fortune it hither bore!'
 Then when they had brought him water, and the host sat beside his guest,
 With courteous mien Sir Gawain this prayer to his host address,
 'Now I pray let this maid eat with me,' 'Sir Knight, ne'er was she allowed
 To sit with knights, or eat with them, lest she wax of their grace too proud.
 And yet so much do we owe thee, loth were I to say thee nay.
 So, daughter, sit thou beside him, and as he shall speak obey!'
 Then she blushed for shame all rosy, yet she did as her father bade,
 And down on the couch by Gawain sat Bené the gracious maid.
 (And two stalwart sons had the boatman beside that maiden sweet)
 Three game-birds, I ween, that even were slain by the falcon fleet,
 And all three did they bear unto Gawain, and a broth with herbs beside,
 And the maiden she courteous served him as she sat by the hero's side;
 For she carved for him dainty morsels, and laid them on bread so white
 With her slender hands, and gently she spake to the stranger knight,
 'Wilt thou send a bird to my mother? for else hath she none, I ween.'
 Then gladly he told the maiden his will e'en as hers had been
 In this thing as in all other—to the hostess the bird they bare,
 And they honoured the hand of the hero, nor the boatman his thanks would spare.
 Purslain and lettuce brought they, in vinegar steeped, I ween
 Had he sought here his strength to nourish little good might such food have been;
 And if one should o'er-long feed on it then the colour it waxeth pale,
 Such pallor as truth betrayeth, if the mouth to its speaking fail.

And if with false red it be hidden, it fadeth, and bringeth shame,
 But she who is true and steadfast she winneth the higher fame.
 If one by goodwill were nourished, then Gawain, he right well had fed,
 To her child naught the mother grudgeth, and as free gave the host his bread.
 Then they bare away the tables, and the hostess she bade him rest,
 And bedding I ween in plenty they brought for the gallant guest.
 And one was of down, and the covering above it of velvet green,
 Yet the velvet was none of the richest tho' fair had its fashion been.
 And a cushion must serve for cover, beneath it should Gawain lie;
 Nor the silk had with gold been purchased, 'twas won in far Araby.
 Of silk, too, the cunning stitching, and the linen was fair, and white
 As snow that they laid above it, and a pillow they brought the knight.
 And a cloak of her own she lent him, for wrapping, that maiden fair,
 'Twas new, and of ermine fashioned, and such as a prince might wear.
 Then leave the host courteous prayed him ere he laid himself down to sleep,
 And men say that alone with Sir Gawain the maiden her watch did keep,
 And I think if he more had prayed her she never had said him Nay—
 Then he slept, for he well might slumber, God keep him till dawn of day!

BOOK XI ARNIVE

Weary he closed his eyelids, and he slept in a slumber deep
 Till the light of the early morning must waken him from his sleep.
 And many a window saw he within that chamber wall,
 And clear glass was before each window—Thro' a doorway the light did fall,
 'Twas open, without was an orchard, thither gat him the gallant knight
 For the air, and the song-birds' music, and to see what might meet his sight
 And but little space had he sat there, when the castle he saw again
 As at eventide he saw it when he fought on the grassy plain.
 And he saw from the hall of the palace full many a maiden gaze,
 And many were fair to look on; and he thought, with a great amaze,
 That a wondrous watch they must keep there, since they wearied not thro' the night,
 And little might they have slumbered, for as yet scarce had dawned the light.
 Then he thought, 'For the sake of these ladies will I lay me to sleep once more.'
 Then again to his couch he gat him, and for covering he drew him o'er
 The mantle the maid had lent him—Did no man his slumber break?
 Nay, sorely the host had vexed him, if one should his guest awake.
 Then of true heart bethought the maiden, who soft by her mother lay,
 And she roused her from out her slumber, and she took to the guest her way,
 And again he slept so sweetly—Then she thought her, that gentle maid,
 That fain would she do him service, and she sat her beside his bed,
 Fair was she, and sweet to look on, and but seldom at eventide,
 Or in hour of the early dawning, such venture has sought my side!
 Short space ere Gawain awakened and beheld how she watched him there,
 And he looked and he laughed upon her, 'God reward thee, thou maiden fair,
 That thou breakest for me thy slumber, on thyself dost thou vengeance take,
 Since nor service nor joust so knightly have I ridden for thy sweet sake!'
 And she answered, that gracious maiden, 'On thy service no claim have I,
 But look thou with favour on me, and thy will do I willingly,
 And all who are with my father, yea, mother alike and child,
 Do hail thee their lord and master, for love of thy dealings mild!'
 Then he quoth, 'Is it long since thou camest? Had I of thy coming known
 Fain would I have asked a question, perchance thou the truth hadst shown:
 Yestreen and again this morning fair ladies have looked on me
 From a mighty tower, of thy goodness now tell me who may they be?'
 But the maiden she shrunk in terror, and she cried, 'Ask me not, Sir Knight,

Since ne'er may I give an answer—I prithee to hear aright,
 If I knew, yet I might not tell thee, nor do thou my silence chide,
 But ask thou what else shall please thee and my lips naught from thee shall hide,
 But on this thing alone keep silence, and follow thou what I say!'

But Gawain, he would ever ask her, and ever an answer pray,
 What ladies were they who sat there, and looked from that stately hall?
 And the maiden she wept full sorely, and aloud in her grief did call.
 'Twas yet in the early dawning, and her father he sought her side,
 Nor I deem me had he been wrathful if here did such chance betide
 That Gawain with the maid had striven, and had forced her unto his will,
 And the maiden, so fair and gentle, in such wise did she hold her still,
 For beside the couch was she seated—Then her father he mildly spake,
 'Now weep not so sore, my daughter, for if one a jest doth make
 Whereof thou at first art wrathful, yet I ween ere the time be long,
 Shall thy sorrow be changed to gladness, and thy wailing to joyful song!'

Quoth Gawain, 'Nay, mine host, naught hath chanced here save that which thine eye may see;
 This maiden I fain would question, but naught would she tell to me,
 For she thinketh, 'tis my undoing, and silence hath she implored:
 But now if it shall not vex thee let my service here find reward,
 And tell me, mine host, if it please thee, how it stands with those ladies there,
 For I know not the place or the country where I looked on such maidens fair,
 So many there are, and their raiment showeth clear to my wondering sight!'

Then the host wrung his hands for sorrow, and he spake, 'Ask me not, Sir Knight,
 In the name of God, ask no question—For wherever thy foot shall speed,
 Or whatever thine eyes shall light on, no need shall be like their need!'

'Then soothly I'll mourn for their sorrow,' quoth Gawain, 'but mine host now say
 Why vex thee so sore for my question? Thine answer why thus delay?'

'Sir Knight, for thy manhood mourn I, if thou wilt not thy question spare
 Then strife sure shall be thy portion, and sorrow thine heart shall bear.
 And thy sorrow of joy shall rob us, myself and my children three,
 Who were born for thy gallant service true service to yield to thee.'

Quoth Gawain, 'Yet for this thou shalt tell me, or if thou still say me, Nay,
 And I learn not from thee the story yet the truth will I know alway!'

Then the host he spake out truly, 'Sir Knight, I must sorely rue,
 The question thou here dost ask me—Thou goest to strife anew,
 Arm thee well, and a shield I'll lend thee—In "Terre Merveil" thou art,
 And the "Lit Merveil" shall be here—And ne'er hath a knightly heart
 Withstood all the many dangers that in Château Merveil shall be!
 Turn aside, ere thy death o'ertake thee, for life should be dear to thee!
 For wherever thine hand shall have striven, or what ventures soe'er it found
 As child's play have been thy perils to those which beset this ground!'

Quoth Gawain, 'Yet 'twould sorely vex me, if I, but to save me pain,
 Rode hence, doing naught, and those ladies had looked for mine aid in vain.
 Long since have I heard of this castle, and since it so near doth stand
 No man from the task shall bring me; to the venture I set my hand!'

Then the host he did sore bemoan him, and he spake to his guest so true,
 'Now as naught is all other peril, what perils around thee drew,
 To the peril of this adventure, to its awe, and its anguish dire,
 And naught but the truth am I speaking, for no man ever spake me liar!
 But that gallant knight, Sir Gawain, for naught would he turn aside,
 But he quoth, 'Now mine host give counsel how the strife I may best abide,
 If thy words be the words of wisdom, and God give me the strength thereto,
 Thy will and thy rede I'll follow, and knightly the deeds I'll do!
 Sir Host, of a sooth it were ill done, did I fail here a blow to strike,
 And coward should I be accounted of foeman and friend alike.'

Then first did the host bemoan him, such sorrow he ne'er might know,
And he quoth to his guest, 'If it may be that Heaven such grace shall show
That death be not here thy portion, then this land unto thee shall fall.
And the stake is full many a maiden fast bound in a magic thrall,
No man ere this day hath freed them—And with them many noble knights
Shall lie as yet imprisoned; and if thou with hand of might
Shall loose them, thou winnest glory, and God showeth grace to thee,
And joyful, o'er light and beauty, king and ruler thou sure shalt be!
And maidens from many a country shall honour thee as their king.
Nor think, if thou now dost ride hence, such deed shame on thee should bring,
Since on this field Lischois Giwellius hath yielded him to thine hand,
And left unto thee his honour; who erstwhile in every land
Hath done gallant deeds of knighthood, of right may I praise his name,
No knight showed a higher courage, or won him a fairer fame.
And in no heart the root of virtue it showeth such fair increase
In blossom and flower of God's planting, save in Ither of Gaheviess!'
'And he who at Nantes slew Prince Ither my ship bare but yesterday,
Five steeds hath he given unto me, (God keep him in peace alway.)
Princes and kings once rode them, but now they afar must fare,
And tidings of him who o'erthrew them must they carry to Pelrapär.
For thus have they sworn the victor—His shield telleth many a tale
Of jousting so fair and knightly—He rode hence to seek the Grail!'
Quoth Gawain, 'Say, whence came he hither? Mine host, since he rode so near,
Knew he naught of the wondrous venture? Or did he the marvel hear?'
'Sir Knight, ne'er a word hath he heard here, I guarded me all too well,
Lest unseemly my deed be reckoned if unasked I the tale should tell.
And hadst thou thyself not asked me thou never from me hadst known
The venture that here awaits thee, wrought of terror and pain alone.
If thou wilt not forego this peril, and thy life shall the forfeit pay,
Then never a greater sorrow have we known than we know to-day.
But if thou shalt here be victor, and over this land shalt reign,
Then my poverty hath an ending, and my loss shall be turned to gain;
Such trust in thy free hand have I, I shall joy without sorrow know
If thy glory here winneth glory, and thy body be not laid low!'
'Now arm thee for deadly warfare!'—unarmed was as yet Gawain,
'Now I prithee bring here my harness!' and the host to his will was fain.
And from head to foot she armed him, the maiden fair and tall,
And her father he sought the charger—Now a shield hung upon the wall,
And the wood it was tough and well hardened, (else Gawain ne'er this tale might tell,)
And the shield and the horse were brought him—and the host he bethought him well;
And, as once more he stood before him, he spake, 'List thou well, Sir Knight,
I will tell thee how thou shalt bear thee, and guard thee thy life in fight:'
'My shield shalt thou carry with thee! Of war shall it bear no trace
For but seldom I strive in battle, nor I count it me as disgrace.
When thou comest, Sir Knight, to the castle, do this, it shall serve thy steed:
At the doorway a merchant sitteth, buy of him that which thou shalt need,
Then give him thy steed, he will hold it, nor care thou what thou shalt buy,
As a pledge will he hold thy charger, and will give it thee joyfully
If unhurt from the Burg thou comest!' Quoth Gawain, 'Say, shall I not ride?'
'Nay, nay, for sore peril neareth, and the maidens their faces hide!'
'Thou shalt find that fair palace lonely, deserted by great and small,
And no token of living creature shalt thou see in that stately hall.
And may God's grace watch o'er thy footsteps, and His blessing go with thine hand
When thou comest into the chamber where the "Lit Merveil" shall stand.
And the couch, and the rollers beneath it, in Morocco they first were made

For the Ruler of all the Faithful; and were it in the balance weighed
 'Gainst all treasures of crown and kingdom it still would outweigh them all.
 And I wot, there shall ill o'ertake thee, and God knoweth what shall befall,
 But I pray that the end be joyful! Yet hearken, Sir Knight, to me,
 This sword and this shield that thou holdest, in thine hand must they ever be,
 For surely when thou shalt think thee that the peril hath done its worst,
 Then *first* mayst thou look for conflict, and *then* shall the storm-cloudburst!
 Then mournful I ween was the maiden, as Gawain to the saddle sprung,
 And all they who stood around her they wept and their hands they wrung,
 Then he quoth to his host, 'God grant me that hereafter I may repay
 The care and the kindly counsel I have won from thy lips to-day.'
 Then leave did he pray of the maiden, and her sorrow was sore to see,
 He rode hence, and they whom he left here they mourned for him bitterly.
 And now, if ye fain would hearken what unto Gawain befell,
 The tale of his wondrous venture right gladly to ye I'll tell.
 And in this wise I heard the story—As he came to the castle gate,
 A merchant with merchandise costly without did his coming wait.
 And so rich were his wares, and precious, that in sooth I were glad at heart
 If I, in so great a treasure, my portion might bear and part.
 Then, Sir Gawain, he sprang from his charger, for ne'er had he seen before
 Outspread in the open market such goods as were here in store.
 And the booth was of velvet fashioned, four-square, and both wide and high,
 And that which lay there for purchase no monarch might lightly buy.
 The Baruch of Bagdad scarcely had paid that which lay therein;
 Nor the Patriarch of Rankulat might think him such prize to win.
 Yea, and great as shall be the treasure that was found but awhile ago
 In the land of the Greeks yet their Emperor such riches might hardly know!
 And e'en if these twain had helped him the price he had failed to pay
 That a man must count for the treasure that here before Gawain lay.
 Then the knight greeted well the merchant as he looked on the wondrous store
 Of marvels that lay before him, but he stayed not to turn it o'er,
 But bade him show clasp and girdle; then he quoth to the hero bold,
 'For many a year have I sat here, yet no man doth my wares behold;
 None but ladies have looked upon them! yet if manhood shall nerve thine hand
 Of all here shalt thou be the master; they were brought from a distant land,
 If here thou shalt be the victor, (for in sooth hast thou come for fight,)
 And the venture shall well betide thee, I will deal with thee well, Sir Knight!
 For all that my booth containeth is thine if thou win the day!
 So trust thou in God and His mercy, and take to the Burg thy way.
 Plippalinot in sooth hath sent thee, and thy coming well praised shall be
 Of many a gracious maiden if thy prowess shall set her free!'
 'Now wouldst thou withstand this venture leave here for awhile thy steed,
 If thou trust it unto my keeping, I will give to the charge good heed.'
 Quoth Gawain, 'Yea, I'll gladly do so, if unseemly be not the task,
 Too greatly I fear thy riches such grace from thine hand to ask,
 For ne'er since I rode upon it such keeper my steed hath known'—
 Out quoth the merchant freely, 'Sir Knight, all shall be thine own,
 Myself, and the wares I guard here, (nor further of them I'll speak.)
 They are his, who in safety faceth the danger thou here dost seek!'
 And so bold was I ween the hero that on foot did he go straightway,
 Undaunted, to face the peril untold that before him lay.
 And, as I before have told ye, the Burg it stood high and wide,
 And its bulwarks so stoutly builded did guard it on either side.
 If for thirty years they stormed it, not a berry or leaf would yield,
 However the foe might threaten; in the midst was a grassy field,

(Yet the Lechfeld I ween is longer,) many turrets they towered on high,
And the story it tells that Gawain, as the palace he did espy,
Saw the roof shine all many-coloured, as peacock's plumes its glow,
And so bright it was that its glory was dimmed nor by rain nor snow.
And within was it richly furnished, and decked to delight the eye,
And the pillars were richly carven, and the windows were arched on high,
And many a fair couch costly had they set there against the wall,
Nor touched they the one to the other, and rich covers lay over all.
And but now had the maidens sat there, but each one had taken thought,
And no one of them all remained there, and of welcome Gawain found naught.
Yet their joy came again with his coming, and the day of their bliss was he,
And 'twere well they had looked upon him, none fairer their eyes might see.
Yet none there might dare behold him, tho' to serve them he aye was fain,
And yet in this thing were they guiltless—Thro' the palace strode knight Gawain,
And he looked on this side and the other, and he sought well the chamber o'er,
If to left or to right I know not, but he saw there an open door,
And wherever that door might lead him the hero was fain to go,
If high fame he might gain for his seeking, or die there a death of woe!
So stepped he within the chamber, and behold! the shining floor,
As glass it lay smooth beneath him, and the Lit-Merveil he saw,
The wonder-couch; and beneath it four rollers as crystal clear,
And fashioned of fire-red rubies: as the swift wind afar and near
Did it speed o'er the shining pavement, no floor might fairer be,
Chrysolite, sardius, jasper, inwrought there the eye might see.
For so had Klingsor willed it, and the thought it was his alone,
From far-off lands his magic had brought to the Burg each stone.
So smooth 'neath his feet the pavement, scarce might be his footing hold,
Then fain would he seek the venture, but, so is the marvel told,
As ever he stood before it the couch from its station fled,
And swift as the winds of heaven o'er the glittering floor it sped.
(And Gawain he found all too heavy the shield that his hand gripped fast,
And yet did his host give counsel it should ne'er on one side be cast.)
Thought Gawain, 'Now, how may I reach thee, since still thou dost fly from me?
Methinks thou shalt have a lesson, it may be I may spring to thee!'
Then still stood the couch before him, and straight from the ground he leapt
And stood firm in the midst of the marvel, and again o'er the floor it swept,
And hither and thither turning in the four walls its goal it found,
And blow upon blow fell swiftly, till the Burg echoed back the sound.
And many a charge did he ride there, with crash, as of thunder-cloud,
Or as trumpeters blow together when their blasts thro' the hall ring loud,
And the one vieth with the other, and each for a fair prize blows.
Less loud should have been their tumult than the tumult that there arose!
And waken and watch must Sir Gawain, altho' on a bed he lay.
How best might the hero guard him? The noise he was fain to stay,
And his head with his shield he covered—There he lay, and would wait His will
Who hath help in His power, and helpeth all those who entreat Him still,
And shutteth His ear to no man who in sorrow for aid doth pray.
And the man who is wise and steadfast, as dawneth his sorrow's day,
Doth call on the hand of the Highest, that shall ne'er be too short to reach,
And the aid that shall meet their lacking He sendeth to all and each.
And so was it now with Gawain—Thro' Whose grace he had gotten fame,
He called on His power and His mercy to shelter him here from shame.
Then stilled for a space the clamour—The couch stood within the hall,
And an equal space had they measured from its station to either wall.
Yet now waxed his peril greater, for five hundred missiles, swung

With craft from hands yet hidden, were against Sir Gawain flung.
 And they fell on the couch as he lay there; but the shield it was hard and new,
 And it sheltered him well, and I think me of the blows did he feel but few.
 And the stones were as river pebbles, so heavy, and hard, and round,
 And in many a place on the surface of the shield might their trace be found.
 At length was the stone-shower ended, and never before he knew
 Such sharp and such heavy missiles as those which toward him flew.
 For now full five hundred cross-bows were bended, their bolts they sped,
 And each one was aimed at the hero as he lay on the Wonder-Bed.
 (And he who hath faced such peril in sooth he of darts may tell:)
 Yet their wrath was soon spent, and silence for awhile on the chamber fell.
 And he who would seek for comfort he ne'er on such couch should lie!
 Little solace or rest may he find there, but peace from his face shall fly!
 And youth would wax grey and agèd, if such comfort should be its share
 As fell to the lot of Gawain, when he lay on that couch so fair.
 Yet nor weariness nor terror had weakened or hand or heart,
 Tho' the stones and the bolts of the cross-bow had done on his limbs their part,
 And spite of both shield and corslet, sore bruised and cut was he:
 And he thought that, this peril ended, the venture should ended be—
 But yet with his hand must he battle, and the prize of the victor win,
 For a doorway e'en now flew open, and one trode the hall within;
 And the man was a mighty peasant, and fearful of face, and grim,
 And the hide of the grey sea-otter was his covering on head and limb,
 And his hosen were wide, and he carried a club in his strong right hand,
 And 'twas thicker I ween than a pitcher that round-bellied doth firmly stand.
 So came he unto Sir Gawain, (and his coming it pleased him ill,)
 Yet he thought, 'He doth bear no harness, mine arms shall withstand him still,'
 Upright on the couch he sat him, as nor terror nor pain he knew,
 And the peasant, as he would flee him, a space from the bed withdrew,
 And he cried in a voice so wrathful, 'From *me* hast thou naught to fear,
 Yet such peril I'll loose upon thee that thy life must thou buy full dear;
 The devil himself doth aid thee, else wert thou not still in life,
 Bethink thee, for death cometh swiftly, and the ending of all thy strife,
 No more can the devil shield thee, that I tell thee ere hence I pass!'
 Then he gat him once more thro' the doorway, and Gawain gripped his sword-hilt fast,
 And the shafts did he smite asunder of the arrows that thro' his shield
 Had passed, and had pierced his armour, nor yet to his hand would yield.
 Then a roar, as of mighty thunder, on the ear of Gawain did fall,
 As when twenty drums were sounding to dance in the castle hall.
 Then the hero, so firm and dauntless, whose courage ne'er felt the smart
 Of the wounds that cowardice pierceth, thought thus in his steadfast heart:
 'What evil shall now befall me? Must I yet more sorrow know?
 For sorrow enow have I seen here, yet here will I face my foe!'
 He looked toward the peasant's doorway, and a mighty lion sprang thro',
 And its size was e'en that of a warhorse, and straight on Gawain it flew.
 But Gawain he was loth to fly here, and his shield he held fast before,
 As best for defence should serve him, and he sprang down upon the floor.
 And the lion was hunger-ravening, yet little should find for food,
 Tho' raging it sprang on the hero, who bravely its rush withstood.
 The shield it had near torn from him, with the first grip its talons fierce
 It drave thro' the wood, such hardness but seldom a beast may pierce.
 Yet Gawain did right well defend him, his sword-blade aloft he swung,
 And on three feet the beast must hold him, while the fourth from the shield yet hung.
 And the blood gushed forth on the pavement, and Gawain he firmer stood,
 And the fight raged hither and thither, as the lion, on the hero good,

Sprang ever with snorting nostrils, and gleaming fangs and white—
And if on such food they had reared it, that its meat was a gallant knight,
I had cared not to sit beside it! Nor such custom pleased Gawain well,
Who for life or for death must fight it—and the strife ever fiercer fell.
So sorely the beast was wounded, the chamber with blood ran o'er;
Fierce sprang the lion upon Gawain, and would bear him unto the floor,
But Gawain a sword-thrust dealt him, thro' the heart the swift blade sped
Till his hand smote full on the breast-bone, and the lion at his feet fell dead.
And now all the deadly peril and the conflict was over-past—
In the same hour Gawain bethought him, 'Where now shall my lot be cast?
Since to sit in this blood I like not, and I must of the couch beware,
For it runneth a race so frantic 'twere foolish to sit me there!'
But yet was his head so deafened with the blows that upon him fell,
And many his wounds, and the life-blood did forth from its fountains well,
And his strength waxed faint, and it left him, and he fell on the chamber floor;
His head lay on the lion's body, and the shield might he hold no more.
And if wisdom and power were his portion, of the twain was he reft I ween,
And tho' fair was the Burg, yet within it full rough had his handling been.
His senses forsook him wholly—no such pillow I ween was his
As that which on Mount Ribbelé Gy mele gave to Kahenis;
Both fair and wise was the maiden—and his honour he slept away—
But here honour ran swift-footed to Gawain as he prostrate lay.
For in sooth ye shall well have hearkened, and shall know how such chance befell,
That thus lay the hero lifeless, from the first have ye heard it well.
Then in secret one looked upon him, and the chamber with blood was red,
And the lion alike and the hero they lay as the twain were dead.
'Twas a fair and gracious maiden who saw thro' a loop-hole high,
And her face it grew wan, and the colour from her lips and her cheek must fly.
And youth was so heavy-hearted that old age sore must mourn her tale.
Yet Arnivé was wise, and her wisdom did here o'er the woe prevail,
And still for this deed must I praise her, she drew near to aid Gawain,
And from peril of death she freed him who freedom for her would gain.
Then herself she was fain to behold him, and they gazed thro' the window small,
And naught might they tell, those women, of what waited them in the hall.
Was it news of a joyful future? Or of woe that should last for aye?
And the queen's heart it sore misgave her that the hero had died that day,
(And the thought brought her grief and sorrow,) since he sought him no better bed,
But silent he lay, and rested on the corse of the lion his head.
And she spake, 'From my heart I mourn thee, if thy manhood so true and brave
Hath won thee no better guerdon, and thy life thou hast failed to save.
If death here hath been thy portion for our sake, who shall strangers be,
And thy truth to such fate hath brought thee, then for ever I'll mourn for thee.
And thy virtue I'll praise, tho' the counting of thy years I may never know!'
And she spake to the weeping women, as they looked on the knight laid low,
'Ye maids who shall be baptized, and by water have won a place
In God's kingdom, pray ye unto Him, that He show to this hero grace!'
Then she sent below two maidens, and she bade them to seek Gawain,
And softly draw nigh unto him, nor pass from his side again
Till they brought her full assurance how it went with the gallant knight,
If perchance he should yet be living, or had found his death in fight.
So she gave to the twain commandment—Did they weep those maidens fair?
Yea, both must weep full sorely for the grief that was here their share,
When they found the hero lying, for his wounds they ran with blood
Till the shield in blood was swimming—then they bent o'er the hero good,
And with gentle hand the helmet one loosened from off his head,

And she saw a light foam gathered upon his lips so red,
 And she waited a space and hearkened, if perchance she might hear his breath,
 For but now had she thought him living, yet she deemed it might well be death.
 And his over-dress was of sable, and the mystic beasts it bore,
 Such as Ilnot the Breton as his badge with great honour wore.
 (And courage and fame were his portion from his youth till his dying day.)
 From the coat with her ready fingers the sable she tore away,
 And she held it before his nostrils, for thus might she better know
 If yet he should live, since his breathing would stir the hair to and fro.
 And the breath was yet there, and straightway she bade her companion bring
 Fair water, the gentle maiden did swift on her errand spring.
 Then the maid placed her ring so golden betwixt his teeth closed fast,
 And deft was her hand in the doing, and between his lips she passed,
 Drop by drop, e'en as he might take it, the water, and little space
 Ere he lifted once more his eyelids, and he looked on the maiden's face.
 And he thanked them, those two sweet children, and offered them service meet—
 Alas! that ye here should find me, unseemly laid at your feet!
 If ye will on this chance keep silence, for good will I count the deed,
 And courtesy shall ye honour if ye give to my words good heed!
 Quoth the maid, 'Thou hast lain, and thou liest, as one who the prize doth hold,
 In sooth thou art here the victor and in joy shall thy life wax old,
 To-day is thy day of triumph! But comfort us now I pray,
 Is it so with thy wounds that, naught fearing, we may joy in thy joy to-day?'
 Then he quoth, 'Would ye see me living, then help shall ye bring to me.'
 And he prayed of those gracious maidens that a leech to his wounds should see,
 Or one who was skilled in healing, 'But if yet I must face the strife,
 Go ye hence, give me here my helmet, and gladly I'll guard my life!'
 But they spake, 'Nay, the strife is over, Sir Knight, send us not away,
 Yet one shall go, and the guerdon of messenger win straightway.
 To the four queens shall she betake her, and shall say that thou livest still,
 And a chamber shall they prepare thee, and leechcraft with right goodwill,
 And with salves shall thy wounds be tended, and so mild shall their working be
 That thy pain shall be swiftly lessened, and healing be brought to thee!'
 Then one of the maids sprang swiftly, and she ran with no halting tread,
 With the news that the knight was living straightway to the court she sped.
 'In sooth shall he be so living, if ever it be God's will,
 Rich in joy may we be henceforward and glad without fear of ill,
 For naught but good help he needeth,' 'Dieu Merci!' then quoth they all.
 Then the old queen wise her maidens did straightway around her call,
 And she bade them a bed prepare him, and a carpet she spread before,
 And a fire on the hearth burnt brightly, and precious the salves they bore.
 And the queen with wisdom mixed them for the healing of cut or bruise.
 In that hour from among her women four maids did Arnivé choose,
 And she bade them disarm the hero, and his harness bear soft away,
 And with wisdom should they deal with him lest he feel himself shamed away.
 'A silk shall ye bear about ye, in its shadow the knight disarm,
 If yet he can walk he may do so, if else, bear him in your arms
 To where I by the bed await him, for his couch will I rightly care,
 If the strife in such wise hath fallen that no deadly wound he bear,
 Then I think me I soon may heal him, but if wounded he be to death
 Then cloven our joy—with the hero are we slain tho' we yet draw breath!'
 And all this was done as she bade them, disarmed was the knight Gawain,
 Then they led him where help they gave him who well knew to ease his pain.
 And of wounds did they find full fifty, or perchance they were even more,
 But the darts had not pierced too deeply since ever his shield he bore.

Then the queen in her wisdom took her warm wine, and a sendal blue,
And Dictam, the herb of healing, and she wiped with her hand so true
The blood from his wounds, and she closed them, and the flow of the life-blood stayed.
And wherever his helm was indented the stones on his head had made
Sore bruises, yet they must vanish 'fore the salves and their healing power,
And the master-skill of Arnivé who tended him in that hour!
And she quoth, 'Ease I well may give thee, whiles Kondrie doth come to me,
And all help that may be in leechcraft of her friendship she telleth free.
Since Anfortas so sore doth suffer, and they seek aid from far and near,
This salve shall from death have kept him, from Monsalväsch 'twas brought me here.'
When Gawain heard she spake of Monsalväsch, then in sooth was he glad at heart,
For he deemed it was near—Then this hero, who ne'er had in falsehood part,
Spake thus to the queen, 'Now, Lady, my senses that far were fled,
Hast thou won back again, and mine anguish I ween hast thou minishèd,
What of strength shall be mine, or of wisdom, I owe to thine hand alone,
Thy servant am I!' But the queen spake, 'Sir Knight, thou such faith hast shown
That we all must rejoice in thy welfare, and strive for it faithfully.
But follow my rede, nor speak much, a root will I give to thee
That shall win thee refreshing slumber, thou shalt care not for drink or meat
Till the night, then such food I'll bring thee thou shalt need not ere morn to eat.'
Then a root 'twixt his lips she laid there, and straightway he fell asleep,
And throughout the day he slumbered, and in coverings they happed him deep.
Rich in honour and poor in shaming, soft and warm, there in peace he lay,
Yet he sneezed, and at whiles he shivered, for the salve wrought on him alway.
And a company of fair women passed within and without the door,
And fair was the light of their faces, and stately the mien they bore.
And she bade them, the Queen Arnivé, that silence they all should keep,
None should call, and no maiden answer, so long as the knight should sleep.
And she bade them fast close the palace, nor burger, nor squire, nor knight,
Should hear what had there befallen till the dawn of the morning light.
But new sorrow drew nigh to the women—The knight slept till even grey,
Then Arnivé the queen in her wisdom drew the root from his lips away.
And straightway he woke, and he thirsted, and they brought him of drink and meat,
And he raised himself and, rejoicing, as they brought him so would he eat:
And many a maid stood before him, such fair service he ne'er had known,
So courteous their mien and bearing—then he looked at them one by one
And he gazed at each and the other, yet still his desire was set
On the lady Orgelusé, for ne'er saw he woman yet,
In all the days of his lifetime, who so near to his heart did lie;
Tho' many his prayer had hearkened, and *some* did their love deny!
Then out spake the gallant hero to Arnivé, his leech so wise,
'Lady, 'twill ill beseem me, nor deal I in courteous guise,
If these ladies stand here before me, I would they might seated be,
Or if such be thy will it were better shouldst thou bid them to eat with me!'
'Nay, Sir Knight, none I ween may sit here save I, the queen, alone,
And shamed would they surely hold them were such service not gladly done,
For our joy shalt thou be; yet I think me that if this be thy will indeed,
Whate'er shall be thy commandment, we will give to thy words good heed.'
But nobly born were those ladies, and their courtesy did they show,
For all with one voice they prayed him he would e'en let the thing be so,
And while he should eat they would stand there; so waited they on the guest
And passed hence when the meal was ended and Gawain was laid to rest.

BOOK XII EIDEGAST

Now he who his rest had broken, if rest he perchance might win,
 Methinks they who hear the story had counted it him for sin.
 For, e'en as the venture telleth, sore toil had the hero known,
 And in sooth did he face such peril that his fame thro' all lands hath flown.
 Lancelot on the sword-bridge battled, and Meljakanz must sue for grace,
 Yet as naught was I ween his danger to the woe that Gawain must face.
 And that which is told of Garel, the valiant and knightly king,
 Who o'erthrew the lion 'fore the palace and made Nantes with his daring ring—
 And he sought the knife too, Garel, but he paid for his deed full dear
 In the pillar of marble—greater was the venture ye read of here!
 For the darts that were shot against Gawain, as his manly courage bade,
 For a mule were too great a burden if they all on its back were laid!
 The Perilous Ford hath its dangers; and Erec must sorrow know,
 When for Schoie-de-la-kurt he battled, and Mabonagrein would fain lay low,
 Yet ne'er had he faced such peril as fell here to knight Gawain.
 Nor Iwein, the gallant hero, who water would pour amain,
 Nor feared of the stone the venture—Were these perils all knit in one,
 He who knoweth to measure danger saith Gawain greater deeds had done!
 What peril is this I tell of? If ye will, I the woe will name,
 Or too early perchance the telling? Swift-foot Orgelúsé came,
 And straight to the heart of the hero hath she taken her silent way,
 That heart that hath ne'er known trembling, that courage hath ruled away.
 And how came it so stately lady might hide in so small a space?
 For narrow I ween was the pathway that led to her resting-place.
 And all sorrow he knew aforetime was as nought to this bitter woe,
 And a low wall it was that hid her when his heart did her presence know
 In whose service he never faltered, but was watchful as he was true.
 Nor find ye here food for laughter, that one who ne'er terror knew,
 A hero so brave in battle, should yield to a woman's hand.
 Alas! woe is me for the marvel that no man may understand!
 And Frau Minne she waxeth wrathful 'gainst him who the prize hath won,
 Yet dauntless and brave hath she found him, and shall find him, till life be done.
 Who harm on a wounded foeman shall work doth his honour stain,
 Yet in strength 'gainst his will did Love bind him, and it turned to him for gain.
 Frau Minne, wouldst have men praise thee? Then this will I say to thee,
 This strife shall be not to thine honour, since sore wounded Gawain shall be.
 And ever throughout his life-days has he lived as thou didst command,
 And he followed in this his father, and the men of his mother's land.
 For they yielded thee loyal service since the days Mazadan was king,
 Who Terre-de-la-Schoie from Fay-Morgan in thy service did gallant bring.
 And this do men tell of his children, no man from his fealty fell.
 And Ither of Gaheviess bare it, thy badge, and he served thee well;
 And never in woman's presence did one speak of the hero's name
 But their hearts yearned in love towards him, and they spake it, nor thought it shame,
 How then when they looked upon him? Then the tale first was told aright!
 Frau Minne, a faithful servant didst thou lose in that gallant knight!
 Slay Gawain if thou wilt, as his cousin Ilinot by thine hand was slain,
 Since thy power with the bitter torment of desire did the knight constrain,
 Till he strove for the love of his lady all the days of his fair young life,
 Florie of Kanedig was she, and he served her in many a strife.
 And he fled from the land of his fathers in the days of his youth's unrest,
 And was reared by this queen, and Britain ne'er saw him but as a guest.
 And the burden of Love weighed on him, and from Florie's land he fled,

Till the day that in true love's service, as I told ye, men found him dead.
And often the kin of Gawain thro' love have known sorrow sore,
And of those by Frau Minne wounded could I name to ye many more.
And why did the snow and the blood-drops move Parzival's faithful heart?
'Twas his *wife* wrought the spell, I think me! Yea, others have known thine art,
Galoës and Gamuret hast thou vanquished, and in sooth hast thou laid them low,
And the twain for their true love's guerdon must the death of a hero know.
And Itonjé, Gawain's fair sister, must love Gramoflanz the king,
And grieve for her love; and sorrow, Frau Minne, thou once didst bring
On fair Surdamur and her lover: since thou sufferest not Gawain's kin
To seek them another service, so on him wouldst thou honour win!
Be mighty towards the mighty but here let Gawain go free,
His wounds they so sorely pain him, and the hale should thy foemen be!
But many have sung of love's working who never so knew love's power,
For myself, I would hold me silent—But true lovers shall mourn this hour
What chanced unto him of Norway, for the venture he faced right well,
And now, without help or warning, love's tempest upon him fell!
Quoth the hero, 'Alas, for restless my resting-place shall be,
One couch did so sorely wound me, and the other hath brought to me
Sore torment of love and longing! Orgelusé must favour show
Unto me her true knight and servant, or small joy shall my life-days know!'
As unresting he turned, and he stretched him, the bands from his wounds were torn,
So restless he lay and wakeful awaited the coming morn.
And at last the day shone on him, and many a battlefield
And sword-strife more rest had brought him than the rest which his couch might yield.
Would one liken his woe unto Gawain's, and be e'en such a lover true,
Of his love-wounds let him be healèd, and then smitten by darts anew,
And methinks he shall find that the sorrow and torment shall vex him more
Than all the sum of the sorrow he hath borne for love's sake before!
Nor love's torments alone vexed Gawain—Ever clearer it grew, the light,
Till dark seemed the lofty tapers that erstwhile had shone so bright.
Then up sprang from his couch the hero, and as blood, and as iron, red
With wounds, and with rust, was his linen, yet beside him he saw outspread
Hosen and shirt of woollen, and the change pleased our hero well,
And robes lined with fur of the marten, and a garment that o'er them fell,
(In Arras its stuff was woven, and from Arras 'twas hither sent,)
And boots had they lain beside it, none too narrow for his content.
In these garments anew he clothed him, and forth from the chamber went
Gawain, and hither and thither his steps thro' the palace bent,
Till he found the hall of his venture, no riches he e'er had known
To liken unto the glories within this fair castle shown.
And there at one side of the palace a narrow dome he found,
And it rose high above the building, and a staircase within it wound,
And above stood a shining pillar; nor of wood was it shapen fair,
But so large and so strong that the coffin of Kamilla it well might bear.
And Klingsor, the wise, he brought it from the kingdom of Feirefis,
And his cunning and skill had fashioned both the hall and the stair I wis!
No tent might so round be fashioned; did the Master Geometras will
To raise such a work he had failèd, for unknown to his hand the skill.
'Twas magic alone that wrought it—The venture it bids us know
Of diamond, amethyst, topaz, carbuncle with red-fire glow,
Of chrysolite, emerald, ruby, and sardius, the windows tall,
That each one like to the other encircled this wondrous hall.
And rich as the window columns, and carven, the roof o'erhead,
And herein was a greater marvel than all marvels ye yet have read;

For, the vault below, no pillar was like to that column fair
 That stood in the midst of the circle, and wondrous the power it bare,
 For so the venture telleth—Gawain fain would gaze around,
 And alone did he climb the watch-tower, and precious the jewels he found.
 And he saw there a greater wonder, and the sight never vexed his eye,
 For he thought him upon the column all the lands of the earth did lie.
 And he saw the countries circle, and the mighty mountains' crest
 Meet, e'en as two hosts in battle, as one vision the other pressed.
 And folk did he see in the pillar, and on horse or afoot they went,
 They ran, and they stood: in a window he sat him on seeing bent.
 Came the agèd Queen Arnivé, with Sangivé her child, and there
 Were two maidens, the gentle daughters that Sangivé erewhile did bear.
 And the four queens they came unto Gawain, and he saw them and sprang upright;
 And thus quoth the Queen Arnivé, 'Methinks thou shouldst sleep, Sir Knight,
 For though rest may no longer please thee, thou art wounded too sore, I trow,
 That thou further toil and labour shouldst yet for a season know!'
 Quoth the knight, 'Lady mine and my mistress, since thy wisdom hath brought to me
 My wit, and my strength, all my lifetime thy servant I fain would be!'
 Quoth the queen, 'If I so may read them, the words thou didst speak but now,
 And thou ownest me as thy mistress, then Sir Knight, to my bidding bow,
 And kiss at my will these ladies, as thou mayest, without thought of shame,
 Since nor mother nor maid before thee but a kingly birth may claim!'
 Then glad was Gawain at her bidding, and he kissed those ladies three,
 And Sangivé was first, then Itonjé, and the third was the fair Kondrie.
 And the five sat them down together, and Gawain saw those maidens twain,
 Their face and their form so gracious, and he looked, and he looked again;
 Yet one woman so worked upon him, for yet in his heart she lay,
 That their beauty by Orgelusé's he deemed but a cloudy day.
 For he held with the Lady of Logrois none other might well compare,
 And his heart and his thoughts were captive to this lady so sweet and fair.
 Now 'twas done, and Gawain had been greeted with a kiss by those ladies three,
 And so fair were they all that I wot well their beauty would fatal be
 To a heart that was yet unwounded—Then he spake to the elder queen,
 And he prayed her to tell of the pillar, and the marvels he there had seen.
 Quoth Arnivé, 'By day and by night-time that pillar, I ween, doth throw
 Its light for six miles around it, so long as its power I know.
 And all that within that circuit doth chance on its face we see,
 In water, or on the meadow, and true shall the vision be.
 The bird and the beast we see here, the guest and the woodman true,
 He who to this land is a stranger, or its ways of aforetime knew.
 Yea, all may we find within it, and it shineth for six miles round;
 And so fast and so firm it standeth none moveth it from the ground,
 And no hammer shall ever harm it, and no smith hath, I ween, the skill.
 'Twas stolen from Queen Sekundillé, I think me, against her will!'
 Now Gawain he saw at this moment on the column a goodly pair,
 A knight with a lady riding, and he thought him the maid was fair,
 And clearly and well he saw them—and armed were both steed and knight,
 And his helmet was plumed and jewelled, and it gleamed in the morning light.
 And they rode at a hasty gallop thro' the defile out on the plain:
 Tho' I wot well he little knew it, yet they rode but to seek Gawain!
 And they came by the self-same pathway that Lischois he rode afore,
 The proud knight whom Gawain had vanquished, and in joust from his charger bore.
 And the lady she held the bridle of the knight who to joust would ride,
 And the sight to Gawain brought sorrow, and swiftly he turned aside,
 And behold! 'twas no lying vision, for without on the grassy plain

By the river rode Orgeluse, and a knight at her side drew rein.
E'en as hellebore within the nostril pierceth sharp, and a man doth sneeze,
Thro' his eye to his heart came the Duchess, and she robbed him of joy and ease!
Alas! I wot well 'gainst Frau Minne all helpless shall be Gawain—
Then he looked on the knight who rode there, and he spake to the queen again,
'Lady, a knight I see there, who rideth with well-aimed spear,
Nor will cease from the goal he seeketh—Well! I ween he may find it here,
Since he craveth some deed of knighthood I am ready with him to fight,
But say, who shall be the maiden?' she quoth, 'Tis the lady bright
Who is Duchess and queen of Logrois,—Now 'gainst whom doth she bear ill-will?
For the Turkowit rideth with her, and unconquered shall he be still.
With his spear such fame hath he won him, as were riches for kingdoms three,
And against a hand so valiant 'twere best not to venture thee;
For strife is it all too early, and thou shalt be hurt too sore,
And e'en wert thou whole I should rede thee to strive with him nevermore!'
Quoth Gawain, 'If indeed I be lord here then he who so near shall seek
Deeds of knighthood, shall shame mine honour if vengeance I fail to wreak.
Since he lusteth for strife, O Lady, thou shalt give me mine armour here!'
Then the ladies, the four, bewailed them with many a bitter tear:
And they quoth, 'Wilt thou deck thy glory? wilt thou greater honour know?
Strive not now, shouldst thou fall before him then greater shall wax our woe.
But e'en if thou be the victor, if thou girdest thine harness on
Thou must die who so sore art wounded, and with thee are we all undone!'
Gawain, he was sorely anguished, and the cause have ye heard aright,
For he counted himself dishonoured by the coming of such a knight
And his wounds, they must sorely pain him, yet love's torment it vexed him more,
And the grief of these four fair ladies, and the love they towards him bore.
Then he bade them to cease from weeping, and harness and sword he craved,
And his charger; and those fair women they led forth the hero brave.
And he bade them go forth before him, and adown the steps they wind
To the hall where the other maidens so sweet and so fair they find.
Then Gawain for his perilous journey was armed 'neath the light of eyes
Tear-dimmed, and they secret held it, and none knew save the merchant wise.
And they bade him the steed make ready, and the hero he slowly stept
To the place where his charger waited—nor light on its back he leapt,
But scarcely his shield might he carry, for in sooth was he wounded sore.
And thro' centre and rim was it piercèd, and traces of battle bore!
Then again he bestrode his charger, and he turned from the Burg away,
And he rode to his host so faithful; and never he said him Nay,
But all that he asked he gave him, a spear both strong and new,
(Many such had, I ween, been his tribute from that plain where they joustèd true.)
Then Gawain bade him ship him over, in a ferry they sought the shore,
And the Turkowit, who high courage and the thought of sure victory bore;
For so well against shame was he armèd that ill-deeds from before him fled,
And his fame was so high accounted, that they made of the sward their bed
Who would ride a joust against him—From their charger they needs must fall,
And of those who had faced his valour, his spear had o'erthrown them all.
And this was the rule of the hero, that by spear-thrust, and no sword-blade,
Would he win to him fame in battle, or his honour be prostrate laid.
And to him who should face his onslaught, and o'erthrow him, the self-same day
Would he yield, nor defend him further, but would give him his pledge straightway.
And thus heard Gawain the story from him who the pledge did hold,
For his pledge Plippalinòt took there, when the tale of the joust was told.
Did one fall while the other sat still, with goodwill of the heroes twain
Did he take that which one must forfeit, and the other methinks should gain,

Of the charger I speak, hence he led it, for he deemed they enough had fought.
 Who was victor, and who the vanquished, from the Burg were the tidings brought,
 For the women, they looked on the jousting, and many a conflict saw.
 Then he bade Gawain seat him firmly, and the charger he led to shore,
 And his shield and his spear he gave him—and the Turkowit swiftly came
 As one who his joust can measure, nor too high nor too low his aim.
 And Gawain turned his horse against him—of Monsalväsch, Gringuljet,
 And it answered unto the bridle, and his spear 'gainst the foe he set.
 Now forward!—the joust be ridden—Here rideth King Lot's fair son,
 Undaunted his heart—Now know ye where the helm hath its fastening won?
 For there did his foeman strike him; but Gawain sought another aim,
 And swift thro' the helmet's visor with sure hand the spear-point came,
 And plain to the sight of all men was the fate of the joust that day,
 On his spear short and strong the helmet from his head Gawain bare away,
 And onward it rode, the helmet! But the knight on the grass lay low,
 Who was blossom and flower of all manhood till he met with such mighty foe.
 But now he in joust was vanquished, and the jewels from his helm were seen
 To vie with the dew on the herbage and the flowers on the meadow green.
 And Gawain, he rode back unto him, and his pledge did he take that day,
 And the boatman he claimed the charger, who was there should say him Nay?
 Thou art joyful, and yet hast small reason,' spake the lady of Gawain's love,
 (As of old were her words of mocking,) 'Since wherever thy shield doth move
 The lion's paw doth follow—And thou thinkest fresh fame to gain
 Since the ladies have looked on thy jousting—Well thou mayst in thy bliss remain,
 Since the Lit Merveil hath dealt gently and but little harm hath wrought!
 And yet is thy shield all splintered as if thou hadst bravely fought—
 Thou art doubtless too sorely wounded to yearn for a further fray?
 And such ill to the 'Goose' be reckoned, that I called thee but yesterday.
 So eager wert thou to vaunt thee, as a sieve hast thou piercèd thro'
 Thy shield, one would deem it riddled with the darts that toward thee flew.
 But *to-day* mayst thou well shun danger—If thy finger shall wounded be
 Ride hence to the maids of the castle, for well will they care for thee!
 Far other strife were *his* portion, to whom I a task would give,
 Did thine heart yet yearn for my favour, and thou wouldst in my service live!'

Quoth Gawain to the Duchess, 'Lady, tho' deep were my wounds I trow
 They ere this have found help and healing—If such help I from thee might know
 That thou, gracious, wouldst own my service, no peril would be so great,
 But I, for thy love and rewarding, the issue would gladly wait!'

Quoth she, 'Then shalt thou ride with me new honour perchance to gain!'

Then rich in all joy and contentment was that valiant knight Gawain—
 And the Turkowit went with the boatman, and he bade him the tidings bear
 To the Burg, and there pray the maidens to have of the knight good care.
 And his spear it was yet unsplintered, tho' both horses they spurred amain
 To joust, his right hand yet held it, and he bare it from off the plain.
 And many a maiden saw him, and wept as he rode away.

Quoth Arnivé, 'Our joy and comfort hath chosen to him to-day
 A joy for the eyes and a sorrow for the heart, yea, both flower and thorn,
 Alas! that he rides with the Duchess, since he leaveth us here forlorn.
 To the Perilous Ford he rideth, and his wounds sure shall work him ill!'

(Maids four hundred must weep for his going, yet new tasks would he fain fulfil.)
 But yet tho' his wounds they pained him, his sorrow had taken flight
 When he looked upon Orgelusé, so fair was her mien and bright.
 Then she quoth, 'Thou shalt win me a garland of fresh leaves from off a tree,
 And I for the gift will praise thee—If thou doest this deed for me
 Thou shalt find in my love rewarding!' Then he quoth, 'Wheresoe'er it stand,

The tree that shall bring such blessing as reward unto this mine hand,
If I not in vain bemoan me, but win hearing for this my grief,
Then thy garland, tho' death it bring me, shall lack not a single leaf!
And tho' many a blossom bloomed there yet their colour it was as naught
To the colour of Orgelúsé, and Gawain on her beauty thought
Till it seemed him his grief of aforetime and his anguish had fled away—
And thus with her guest did she journey a space from the Burg that day,
And the road it was straight and easy, and it led thro' a forest fair,
And Tamris I ween and Preisein were the names that the trees did bear,
And the lord of the wood was Klingsor—Then Gawain the hero spake,
'Say, where shall that garland blossom which the spell of my grief shalt break?'
(In sooth he had best o'erthrown her, as oft shall have chanced I trow
To many a lovely lady.) Then she quoth, 'Thou shalt see the bough
Whose plucking shall win thee honour!' O'er the field ran a deep ravine,
And so near did they ride to the chasm that the tree from afar was seen.
Then she quoth, 'Now, Sir Knight, one guardeth that tree who my joy hath slain,
If thou bring me a bough from off it, no hero such prize shall gain
As from me shall be thy rewarding! And here must I hold my way,
Nor further may I ride with thee; but make thou no more delay,
God have thee in His safe keeping! Thine horse must thou straightway bring
To the gulf, and with sure hand urge it o'er the Perilous Ford to spring.'
So still on the plain she held her, and on rode the gallant knight,
And he hearkened the rush of water that had riven a path with might
Thro' the plain—it was deep as a valley, and no man its waves might ford;
Then Gawain spurred his steed towards it, and he sprung o'er the flood so broad,
And yet but the charger's fore-feet might light on the further side,
And they fell in the foaming torrent; and the lady in anguish cried,
For swift and wide was the water; yet Gawain he had strength enow,
Tho' heavy the weight of his armour, for he saw where there grew a bough
That hung o'er the foaming torrent, and he grasped it, for life was dear,
And he gained on the bank a footing, and he drew from the waves his spear.
Up and down the stream swam the charger, and Gawain to its aid would go,
Yet so swift was the rush of the water he followed with pain its flow,
For heavy I ween his harness, and his wounds they were deep and sore:
Then he stretched out his spear as a whirlpool bare the charger towards the shore—
For the rain and the rush of the waters had broken a passage wide,
And the bank at the place was shelving, and the steed swept towards the side—
And he caught with the spear its bridle, and drew it towards the land
Till the hero at last might reach it and lay on the rein his hand.
And Gawain, the gallant hero, drew his horse out upon the plain,
And the steed shook itself in safety, nor the torrent as prize might gain
The shield—Then he girt his charger, and the shield on his arm he took:
And if one weepeth not for his sorrow methinks I the lack may brook,
Tho' in sooth was he in sore peril—For love he the venture dared,
For the fair face of Orgelúsé, his hand to the bough he bared.
And I wot, 'twas a gallant journey, and the tree it was guarded well,
He was *one*, were he *twain*, for that garland his life must the payment tell.
King Gramoflanz, he would guard it, yet Gawain he would pluck the bough.
The water, men called it Sabbins, and the tribute was harsh enow
That Gawain would fetch when both charger and knight did the wild waves breast.
Tho' the lady was fair, I had wooed not! To shun her methinks were best.
When Gawain erst the bough had broken and its leaves in his helm did wave,
Uprode a knight towards him, and his bearing was free and brave.
Nor too few were his years nor too many; and in this he his pride had shown,
What evil so e'er befell him he fought not with *one* alone,

Two or more must they be, his foemen! So high beat his gallant heart,
 That whate'er *one* might do to harm him unscathed might he thence depart.
 To Gawain this son of King Irôt a fair 'good-morrow' gave,
 'Twas King Gramoflanz—"To the garland that doth there in thine helmet wave
 I yield not my claim!" thus quoth he, 'Sir Knight, were ye *two* I trow,
 Who here for high honour seeking had reft from my tree a bough,
 I had greeted ye not, but had fought ye, but since thou alone shalt be,
 Thou canst ride hence, for strife unequal I deem it a shame to me!'

And Gawain, too, was loth to fight him, for no armour the king did wear,
 And naught but a yearling falcon he did on his white hand bear.
 (And the sister of Gawain gave it, Itonjé the maid was hight.)
 His headgear in Sinzester fashioned was of peacock's plumage bright,
 And green as grass was the mantle of velvet that wrapped him round,
 And with ermine lined, and on each side it swept even unto the ground.
 None too tall yet strong was the charger on which the king did ride,
 From Denmark by land they brought it, or it came o'er the waters wide.
 And the monarch he rode unarmèd, nor even a sword would bear.
 Quoth King Gramoflanz, 'Thou hast foughten, if thy shield may the truth declare,
 For but little unharmed remaineth, and it seemeth sure to me
 That the "Lit Merveil" was thy portion, and this venture hath fallen to thee!'

'Now hast thou withstood the peril that myself I were fain to dare,
 Had not Klingsor been ever friendly, and warfare with her my share
 Who in Love's strife is ever victor, since her beauty doth win the day;
 And she beareth fierce wrath against me, and in sooth hath she cause alway!
 Eidegast have I slain, her husband, and with him I slew heroes four;
 Orgelúsé herself, as my captive, I thence to my kingdom bore,
 And my crown and my land would I give her, yet what service my hand might yield,
 Of all would she naught, but with hatred her heart 'gainst my pleading steeled.
 And a whole year long I held her, and a whole year long I prayed,
 Yet never she hearkened to me, and ever my love gainsaid.
 And thus from my heart I bemoan me, since I know that her love to thee
 She hath promised, since here I meet thee, and death wouldst thou bring to me.
 If with *her* thou hadst hither ridden, perchance had I here been slain,
 Or perchance ye had died together—such guerdon thy love might gain!'

'And my heart other service seeketh, and mine aid lieth in thine hand,
 Since here thou hast been the victor thou art lord o'er this wonder-land;
 And if thou wilt show me kindness help me now a fair maid to win
 For whose sake my heart knoweth sorrow, to King Lot is she near of kin,
 And no maiden of all earth's maidens hath wrought me such grief and pain!
 Her token I bear—I prithee, if thou seest that maid again
 Swear thou to her faithful service—I think me she means me fair,
 And for her sake I fight, for her favour I many a peril dare;
 For since with true words Orgelúsé her love hath denied to me,
 Wherever for fame I battled, whate'er might my portion be,
 Of joy or of grief, *she* hath caused it, Itonjé, for whom I fight,
 Yet alas! I have ne'er beheld her! Now do me this grace, Sir Knight,
 If aid thou art fain to give me, then take thou this golden ring,
 And unto my lovely lady, I prithee, the token bring.
 Thou art free from strife, I fight not till thou bring with thee two or more.
 What honour were mine if I slew thee? I ever such strife forbore!'

'Yet in sooth I can well defend me, as a man should,' quoth knight Gawain,
 'Thou thinkest small fame will it bring thee if I here at thine hand be slain,
 But what honour shall I have won me by breaking this bough, I pray?
 For none will account it glory if I slay thee unarmed to-day!
 But yet will I do thy message—Give me here the finger-ring,

And thy sorrow of heart, and thy service, I will to thy lady bring,
 Then the king he thanked him freely—But Gawain he quoth in this wise,
 'Now tell me, Sir Knight, who may he be who doth conflict with me despise?'
 'An thou count it me not for dishonour,' quoth the king, 'here my name be told,
 King Irôt he was my father, who was slain by King Lot of old.
 And King Gramoflanz do men call me, and my heart doth such valour know
 That never, for evil done me, will I fight with but one for foe,
 Saving one man alone, hight Gawain, of *him* have I heard such fame
 That to fight with him I am ready, and vengeance from him I claim.
 For his father he dealt with treason, in fair greeting my father slew,
 Good cause have I here for mine anger and the words that I speak are true.
 Now dead is King Lot, and Gawain, his fame o'er all knights stands high
 Of the Table Round, and I yearn still till the day of our strife draw nigh.'
 Then out quoth King Lot's son dauntless, 'Wouldst pleasure thy lady still,
 If indeed she shall be thy lady, and dost speak of her father ill?
 And reckonest to him false treason, and her brother art fain to slay!
 Then indeed must she be false maiden if she mourn not thy deeds alway!
 If true daughter she were, and sister, for the twain would she surely speak,
 And forbid thee, methinks, thine hatred on kinsmen so near to wreak.
 If so be that thy true love's father hath broken his troth, yet thou
 Shouldst, as kinsman, avenge the evil that men spake of the dead, I trow!
 His *son* will not fear to do so, and little methinks he'll care
 If small aid in his need he findeth from the love of his sister fair.
 He, himself, will be pledge for his father, and his sin be upon *my* head,
 For Sir King, I who speak am Gawain, and thou warrest not with the dead!
 But I, from such shame to free him, what honour be mine or fame,
 In strife will I give to the scourging ere thou slander my father's name!'
 Quoth the king, 'Art thou he whom I hated with a hatred as yet unstilled?
 For alike with both joy and sorrow thy valour my soul hath filled.
 And *one* thing in thee doth please me, that at last I may fight with thee,
 And I rede thee to wit that great honour in this hast thou won from me,
 Since I vowed but to fight with thee only—And our fame shall wax great alway,
 If many a lovely lady we bring to behold the fray.
 For I can bring fifteen hundred, and thou art of a fair host king
 At Château Merveil; and on thy side thine uncle can others bring
 From the land that he rules, King Arthur, and Löver its name shall be,
 And the city is Bems by the Korka, as well shall be known to thee.
 There lieth he now with his vassals, and hither can make his way,
 In eight days, with great joy; so I bid thee to meet me the sixteenth day,
 When I come, for my wrong's avenging, to Ioflanz upon the plain,
 And the pay for this garland's plucking I there from thine hand shall gain!'
 Then King Gramoflanz prayed of Gawain to ride unto Rosche Sabbin,
 'For nearer methinks than the city no way o'er the flood thou'lt win!'
 But out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'I will back e'en as erst I came,
 But in all else thy will I'll follow.' Then they sware them by their fair fame
 That with many a knight and lady at Ioflanz they'd meet for strife
 On the chosen day, and alone there would battle for death or life.
 And on this wise Gawain he parted for awhile from the noble knight,
 And joyful he turned his bridle, and the bough decked his helm so bright.
 And he checked not his steed, but spurred it to the edge of the gulf once more,
 Nor Gringuljet missed his footing, but he sprang well the chasm o'er,
 And he fell not again, the hero—Then the lady she turned her rein
 As he sprang to the ground, and tightened the girths of his steed again,
 And swiftly to give him welcome, I ween, she to earth did spring,
 And low at his feet she cast her, and she spake, 'I such need did bring

Upon thee, Sir Knight, as I wot well was more than thy worth might ask,
 And yet have I felt such sorrow, for the sorrow of this thy task,
 And the service that thou hast done me, as I deem she alone doth know
 Who loveth in truth, and, faithful, doth weep o'er her lover's woe!
 Then he quoth, 'Is this truth, and thy greeting be not falsehood in friendly guise,
 Then *thyself* dost thou honour, Lady! For in this shall I be so wise
 That I know a knight's shield claimeth honour, and thou didst against knighthood sin,
 For so high doth it stand that from no man methinks doth he mocking win,
 Who as true knight hath ever borne him—This, Lady, I needs must say,
 Whoever had looked upon me had known me for knight alway,
 Yet knighthood thou wouldst deny me when first thou my face didst see,
 But henceforth that may rest—Take this garland I won at thy will for thee,
 But I bid thee henceforth beware thee that never thy beauty bright
 Shall again in such wise mislead thee to dishonour a gallant knight,
 For I wot, ere such scorn and mocking again at thine hand I bore,
 Thy love thou shouldst give to another, I would ask for it nevermore!
 Then she spake as she wept full sorely, that lady so sweet and fair,
 'Sir Knight, did I tell unto thee the woe that my heart doth bear,
 Thou wouldst own that full sore my sorrow—If I shall discourteous be,
 Then he whom I wrong may forgive me of true heart with forgiveness free.
 For of such joy no man can rob me as the joy that I lost awhile
 In that knight of all knights the bravest, Eidegast, who knew naught of guile!
 So brave and so fair my true love, his fame was as sunlight's ray,
 And for honour he strove so truly that all others, in this his day,
 Both here and afar, born of woman, they owned that his praise stood high
 O'er that of all men, and no glory might e'er with his glory vie.
 A fountain, for aye upspringing, of virtue, his gallant youth,
 And falsehood ne'er shamed his honour nor darkened the light of truth.
 Into light came he forth from the darkness, and his honour aloft he bore,
 That none who spake word of treason might reach to it evermore.
 From the root in a true heart planted it waxed and it spread amain,
 Till he rose o'er all men as Saturn doth high o'er the planets reign.
 And true as the one-horned marvel, since the truth I am fain to tell,
 The knight of my love and desiring,—for whose fate maids may weep full well,
 Thro' its virtue I ween it dieth—And I, I was as his heart,
 And my body was he! Ah! woe is me, that I must from such true love part!
 And King Gramoflanz, *he* slew him, the knight thou but now didst see,
 And the bough thou hast brought unto me from the tree of his ward shall be.'
 'Sir Knight, did I ill-entreat thee, I did it for this alone,
 I would prove if thine heart were steadfast, and my love might to thee atone.
 I know well my words did wound thee, yet they were but to prove thee meant,
 And I pray thee, of this thy goodness, be thine anger with pity blent,
 And forgive me the ill I did thee. I have found thee both brave and true,
 As gold that is tried in the furnace shineth forth from the flame anew,
 So, methinks, doth it shine, thy courage. He, for whose harm I brought thee here,
 As I thought me afore, and I think still, his valour hath cost me dear.'
 Quoth Gawain, 'If awhile death spare me, such lesson I'll read the king
 As shall put to his pride an ending, and his life in sore peril bring.
 My faith as a knight have I pledged him, hereafter, a little space,
 To meet him in knightly combat, nor our manhood shall we disgrace.
 And here I forgive thee, Lady, and if thou wilt not disdain
 My counsel so rough, I'll tell thee wherewith thou mayst honour gain,
 What shall 'seem thee well as a woman, nor in aught shall unfitting be,
 Here we twain are alone, I pray thee show favour and grace to me!'
 But she quoth, 'In an arm thus mail-clad but seldom I warmly lay;

Yet would I not strive against thee, thou shalt on a fitting day
 Win rewarding for this thy service—Thy sorrow will I bemoan,
 Till thou of thy wounds art healèd and all thought of thine ill be flown;
 To Château Merveil I'll ride with thee.' 'Now waxeth my joy indeed!'
 Quoth the hero, of love desirous, and he lifted her on her steed,
 And close clung his arm around her: 'twas more than she deemed him worth
 When first by the spring she saw him, and mocked him with bitter mirth.
 Then joyful Gawain he rode hence; yet the lady she wept alway,
 And he mourned with her woe, and he prayed her the cause of her grief to say,
 And in God's Name to cease from weeping! Then she quoth, 'I must mourn, Sir Knight,
 Because of the hand that slew him, the knight of my love, in fight;
 For that deed to my heart brought sorrow, tho' I naught but delight had known
 When Eidegast's love rejoiced me; yet was I not so o'erthrown
 But since then I might seek his mischief, whatever the cost might be,
 And many fierce jousts have been ridden that were aimed at his life by me.
 And here, methinks, canst thou aid me, and avenge me on him, my foe,
 And repay me for this sore sorrow that my heart doth for ever know.'
 'For the winning his death I took gladly the service he proffered me,
 A king, who of earthly wishes the master and lord should be,
 Sir Knight, he was named Anfortas—As his love-pledge to me he sent
 That which standeth without thy portals, from Tabronit it came, that tent,
 And great I ween is its value—But alas! for that gallant king,
 Such reward did he win in my service as all joy to an end must bring
 Where fain I my love had given, there must I fresh sorrow know,
 For bitter indeed was his guerdon!—As great, or e'en greater, woe
 Than the death of Eidegast brought me, was my lot thro' Anfortas' fate.
 Now say, how shall I, of all women most wretched, in this estate,
 If my *heart* yet be true, be other than of senses and mind distraught,
 Yea, at times have I been beside me when I on Anfortas thought;
 After Eidegast did I choose him, my avenger and love to be—
 Now hearken and hear how Klingsor won that booth thou erewhile didst see:
 When it fell so the brave Anfortas, who this token had sent to me,
 Was of love and of joy forsaken, then I feared lest I shamed should be;
 For Klingsor, such power he wieldeth by the force of his magic spell,
 That maiden or man to his purpose can he force as shall please him well.
 All gallant folk that he seeth, unharmed may they ne'er go free—
 Thus my riches to him I proffered, if so be he sware peace with me.
 And he that should brave the venture, and he that should win the prize,
 To *him* I my love should offer; but if so be that in his eyes
 My love were a thing unworthy, the booth should be mine again.
 But now hast thou done my bidding, and it falleth unto us twain;
 And 'twas sworn in the ears of many, for thereby I hoped to lure
 My foe (yet in this I failèd) for the strife he might ne'er endure.'
 'Now courtly and wise is Klingsor; for his honour it pleased him well
 That many a deed of knighthood, at my will, in his land befell,
 By the hand of my valiant servants, with many a thrust and blow.
 All the week, every day as it passes, and the weeks into years do grow,
 My troops in their changing order beset him by night and day,
 For at great cost my snares so cunning for Gramoflanz did I lay.
 And many have striven with him, yet must him as victor own;
 Yet I still for his life am thirsting, and at last shall he be o'erthrown.
 And some were too rich for my payment, and but for my love would serve,
 Then I bid them for *that* do me service, but reward did they ne'er deserve.'
 'And never a man beheld me but his service I swiftly won,
 Save *one*, and he bare red armour; to my folk he much ill had done,

For hither he rode from Logrois, and he there did my knights o'erthrow
 In such wise that they fell before him, and it pleased me but ill I trow.
 And, between Logrois and thy meadow, five knights they followed fair,
 And he cast them to earth, and their chargers the boatman from thence must bear.
 Then as he my knights had vanquished, I myself did the hero pray
 For my love and my land to serve me, but naught would that red knight say,
 Save he had a wife who was fairer, and should aye to his heart be dear.
 Then wroth was I at his answer, and the name of his wife would hear:
 "Wouldst thou know the name of my chosen?—She reigneth at Pelrapär,
 And *Parzival* all men call me, and naught for thy love I care,
 Other sorrow the Grail doth give me!" Then in anger he rode away;
 Now, I prithee, here give me counsel, if evil I did that day,
 When I, by heart-sorrow driven, proffered love to that gallant knight?
 Should I count my fair fame dishonoured?' Quoth Gawain to that lady bright,
 'A gallant knight is he, truly, who thus thy desire hath crossed,
 Had he to thy bidding hearkened no fame thou thro' him hadst lost!'
 Then Gawain, the courteous hero, and the lady his rein beside,
 Gazed lovingly on each other—and so far on their way did ride,
 That they drew anear to the castle, where the venture erewhile befell,
 And they who looked forth might see them—'Now, Lady, 'twould please me well
 If thou do this thing that I ask thee, from all men my name withhold,
 Which the knight who once stole my charger aloud in thine hearing told.
 But do this that I say, if any shall pray thee to tell my name,
 Say, "I know not the name of my true knight, none spake it when here he came."
 Then she quoth, 'I will keep it secret, since thou wouldst not 'twere spoken here.'
 And the knight and the lovely lady they rode to the Burg anear.
 Now the knights they had heard of the coming of one who, with valiant hand,
 Faced the venture, and slew the lion, and the Turkowit dared withstand,
 Yea, and had in fair joust o'erthrown him; and now on the flowery plain,
 The meadow of strife, rode the hero, and they looked on the knight Gawain,
 From the battlements could they see him; and the forces together draw;
 And with ringing blast of trumpet they pass thro' the castle door,
 And rich banners on high were tossing, and their steeds o'er the plain they flew,
 And he deemed that they came for battle, so swift they towards him drew.
 As Gawain from afar might see them to the lady he spake again,
 'Do they come here with thought of battle?' But she quoth, 'They are Klingsor's men,
 From afar have they seen thy coming, and they ride their new lord to greet,
 With joy would they bid thee welcome! Refuse not this honour meet,
 Since 'tis gladness that doth constrain them.' There, too, in a vessel fair
 Plippalinòt came to meet them, and his daughter with him did bear;
 And swift o'er the flowery meadow the maiden towards them stept,
 And joyful she hailed the hero for whom she aforetime wept.
 Then Gawain gave her courteous greeting, and stirrup and foot she kissed,
 And she turned her to Orgelusé, nor the lady her welcome missed.
 And she prayed him to 'light from his charger the while that she held the rein,
 And then to the ship she led them, the lady and knight Gawain;
 And there, in the place of honour, a carpet and cushions lay,
 And the Duchess by Gawain sat her, as the maiden the twain did pray.
 And her office the maid forgat not, she disarmèd the hero there,
 And in sooth it is said that the mantle she did for his robing bear
 Which had served him that night for cover, when he did 'neath her roof-tree lie,
 And now was the hour for its wearing and it wrapped him right royally.
 So clad was Gawain in her mantle, and his own robe beneath he wore,
 And the harness he laid from off him on one side the maiden bore.
 And now as they sat together for the first time the lady fair

Might look on his face and know him—Then unto the twain they bare
 Two game-birds that well were roasted, and with them a flask of wine,
 And two cakes did the maiden bring them on a cloth that was white and fine—
 The birds were the prey of the falcon—but Gawain and his lady bright
 Must seek water themselves, if to wash them ere they ate here should seem them right,
 And this did the twain; and joyful was the knight that he now might eat
 With her, for whose sake he would suffer joy, or sorrow, as seemed her meet.
 And oft as the cup she gave him that her sweet lips had touched, anew
 Sprang his joy that he thus drank with her, and his sorrow behind him drew,
 And it halted nor might o’ertake him, and his gladness on swift foot sped,
 So fair was her mouth and so rosy her lips that from grief he fled.
 And no longer his wounds they pained him—Then the ladies from out the tower
 They looked on the feast, and below them there rode in the self-same hour,
 On the further side of the river, brave knights who would show their skill.
 And the boatman alike and his daughter Gawain thanked with right goodwill,
 Ere yet he might ferry them over, and the lady spake with him there,
 For the food and the drink they had brought them—Then out quoth the lady fair,
 ’Now what hath that knight befallen, who yestreen, ere I rode away,
 Was o’erthrown in a joust by another? Was he slain, or doth live alway?’
 Quoth the boatman, ’He liveth, Lady, and he spake but this day with me,
 He was given to me for his charger: if thy will be to set him free,
 In his stead will I have the "swallow" that Queen Sekundillé sent
 To Anfortas, be thine the hero, with the harp were I well content!’
 ’Both the harp and the other riches that the booth may within it hold,’
 Quoth the lady, ’are his who sits here, he may give them, or aye withhold,
 Let him do as he will! If he love me, Lischois he methinks will loose,
 Nor freedom unto the other, my prince, will he here refuse.
 Florand of Itolac is he, of my night-watch was he the chief,
 And as he as Turkowit served me, so his sorrow shall be my grief!’
 Quoth Gawain to his lovely lady, ’Ere it weareth to eventide
 Thou shalt look on the twain in freedom!’ Then they came to the further side,
 And the Duchess, so fair to look on, he lifted upon her steed,
 And many a noble horseman were waiting them on the mead,
 And greeting fair they gave them; and they turned to the Burg again,
 And joyful they rode around them and skilful they drew the rein,
 And the Buhurd was fair to look on—What more shall I tell ye here?
 Gawain, and his lovely lady, at the castle they found good cheer,
 In such wise did the ladies greet them at Château Merveil that day,
 And good fortune had here befallen that such bliss should be his alway.
 Then Arnivé she straightway led him to a chamber, and they who knew
 Of such lore his hurts they tended, and they bound up his wounds anew.
 Quoth Gawain unto Arnivé, ’Give me, Lady, a messenger!’
 Then straightway she sent a maiden, and the maid brought again with her
 A footman, both true and manly, as behovèd him well to be.
 And an oath did he swear unto Gawain, to serve him right faithfully,
 And, were it for joy or for sorrow, his errand to secret hold
 From all men, both there and elsewhere, till he came where it might be told.
 Then they brought to him ink and parchment, and Gawain, King Lot’s fair son,
 Wrote clear with his hand the message, and thus did the writing run—
 To them who abode in Löver’s fair country, King Arthur brave
 And his queen, with a faith unstained, true service and good he gave;
 And he said, had he fame deservèd, and they would not his praise were slain,
 They should come to his aid in his trouble, and show to him truth again,
 And with following of knights and ladies to Ioflanz their way should wend,
 Where he came himself, and his honour would in mortal strife defend.

And further, this thing he told them, the foemen on either side
 Had pledged themselves in all honour and pomp to the field to ride;
 And therefore he, Gawain, prayed them, both lady alike and knight,
 If they bare goodwill towards him, with their king to behold the fight.
 For so should it be to their honour. He commended him to them all
 Who were of his service worthy, for the strife that should there befall!—
 No seal did he put to the letter, yet token enough it bare
 Of him who should be the writer. Quoth Gawain to the footman there,
 'No longer shalt thou delay thee, the king and the queen abide
 In the city of Bems by the Korka; seek the queen in the morning-tide
 And the thing she shall bid thee, do thou. But this shalt thou secret hold,
 That I in this land am master shall unto no ear be told.
 Nor of this thing be thou forgetful, that thou shalt my servant be,
 And do thou, without delaying, the errand I give to thee!'
 Then the footman from thence he gat him, and Arnivé she softly went,
 And she asked of him what was his errand? and whither his road was bent?
 And he quoth, 'Nay, I may not tell thee, for an oath have I sworn to-day,
 God keep thee, for I must ride hence!' To the army he took his way.

BOOK XIII KLINGSOR

Then wrathful, I ween, was Arnivé that the messenger said her Nay,
 Nor told her aught of his errand, nor whither his journey lay.
 And in this wise she quoth to the porter, 'Now, whatever the hour may be,
 Be it day, be it night, when he cometh, send tidings thereof to me,
 In secret would I speak with him; thou art wise, as full well I know!'
 Yet wroth was she still with the footman—Then she would to the Duchess go,
 And win from her lips the answer, but ready was she of wit,
 And the name that he bare, her hero, her mouth spake no word of it.
 Gawain he would have her silent, in her hearing his prayer found grace,
 And she spake not, nor might Arnivé learn aught of his name and race.
 Then the sound as of many trumpets thro' the hall of the palace rang,
 And joyful the blasts—Then rich carpets around on each wall they hang,
 And no foot but fell on a carpet would it tread on the palace floor,
 A poor man had surely feared him for the riches that there he saw.
 And many a couch they stood there, around the stately hall,
 Soft were they as down, and rich cushions they laid upon each and all.
 But Gawain with his toil was wearied, and he slept tho' the sun was high,
 And his wounds, with such skill they bound them, tho' his love should beside him lie,
 And he in his arms should hold her, he had gotten no hurt I ween.
 And sounder his daylight's slumber than his sleep of the night had been
 When his love had so sorely vexed him; he slept till the vesper bell,
 Yet still in his sleep he battled for the lady he loved so well.
 Then rich garments of fair silk fashioned, and heavy with broidered gold,
 Did the chamberlain bear unto him—Then out quoth the hero bold,
 'More robes such as these, and as costly, I ween, shalt thou hither bear,
 For Gowerzein's Duke shall need them, and Florand, the hero fair,
 For in many a land hath he battled, and hath won for him glory's meed—
 Now see that thou make them ready, and do my behest with speed!'
 Then he prayed, by a squire, the boatman send hither the captive knight,
 And Lischois did he send at his bidding by the hand of his daughter bright.
 And the maiden Bené brought him for the love that she bare Gawain,
 And the good that he vowed to her father that morn when she wept amain,
 And the knight he left her weeping, and rode on his toilsome way—
 And the highest prize of his manhood it fell to his lot that day.
 The Turkowit too had come there, and Gawain the twain did greet

In all friendship, and then he prayed them beside him to take their seat
 Till their robes should be brought unto them; and costly they needs must be,
 For never was fairer raiment than the garb of those heroes three.
 For one lived of yore named Sarant, (a city doth bear his name,)

From out of the land of Triande in the days that are gone he came.
 In the land of Queen Sekundillé stood a city so great and fair,
 (E'en Nineveh or Akraton with its glories might scarce compare,)

And the city, men called it Thasmé; there Sarant won meed of fame,
 Since he wove there a silk with cunning, *Saranthasmé* should be its name.
 Think ye it was fair to look on? How might it be otherwise,
 For much gold must he give for the payment who would win to him such a prize.

Such robes ware these two and Gawain: then they gat them unto the hall,
 And on one side the knights they sat them, on the other the ladies all,
 And he who a woman's beauty had wisdom to judge aright
 Must reckon Gawain's fair lady the first of these ladies bright.

And the host and his guests so gallant they gazed on her radiant glow,
 As they stood before Orgelusé; and her knights she again must know,
 And her Turkowit, gallant Florand, and Lischois, the young and fair,
 Were set free, without let or hindrance, for the love that Gawain must bear
 To the lovely lady of Logrois—Then their victor they thanked amain,
 Who was dull to all ill, yet had wisdom in all that might true love gain.

As the captives thus free were spoken, Gawain the four queens must see
 As they stood by the side of the Duchess, and he spake in his courtesy,
 And he bade the two knights go nearer, and with kiss greet those ladies bright,
 The three younger queens, and joyful, I ween, was each gallant knight.

And there was the maiden Bené, with Gawain had she sought the hall,
 And I think me a joyful welcome she found there from each and all.
 Then the host would no longer stand there, and the twain did he pray to sit
 By the maidens, as best should please them, and it grievèd them not one whit,
 Such counsel it grieveth no man! Then the gallant Gawain spake,
 'Now which of these maids is Itonjé? Beside her my seat I'd take!'

Thus in secret he spake to Bené, and she showed him the maiden fair,
 'She, with eyes so clear and shining, and red lips, and dusky hair!
 Wouldst thou speak with the maid in secret? Then thy words be wise and few:'
 Thus quoth Bené the wise in counsel, who Itonjé's love-tale knew,
 And knew that King Gramoflanz loved her, and did service for her heart's love,
 And his faith as a knight unstained would fain to the maiden prove.

Gawain sat him by the maiden, (as I heard so the tale I tell,)
 And soft was his speech and gentle, and his words they beseemed him well.
 And tho' few were the years of Itonjé yet great was her courtesy,
 And well did she know how to bear her as a maiden of high degree.
 And this question he asked the maiden, if a lover she aye had known?
 And with wisdom she made him answer, 'To whom might my love be shown,
 For ne'er to a man have I spoken, since the day I first saw the light,
 Save the words which thou now dost hearken as I speak unto thee, Sir Knight!'

'Yet mayst thou have heard the rumour of one who hath bravely fought,
 And striven for prize of knighthood, and with dauntless heart hath sought
 Fair service for fair rewarding?' In such wise spake the knight Gawain;
 But the maiden she quoth, 'Nay, no hero hath striven *my* love to gain;
 Yon lady, the Duchess of Logrois, hath many a gallant knight
 Who serve her for love, or for payment, and hither they come to fight,
 And we of their jousts are witness, yet none shall have come so nigh
 As *thou* hast, Sir Knight, and this conflict thy glory hath raised on high!'

Then he quoth to the lovely maiden, 'Whose pathway shall she have crossed
 With many a chosen hero? Say, who hath her favour lost?'

'That, Sir Knight, hath the valiant monarch, King Gramoflanz, he who bore
 From aforetime the crown of honour; so men say, and *I* know no more!'

Quoth Gawain, 'Thou shalt know more of him, since he draweth the prize anear,
 And with steadfast heart doth he seek it; from his lips I this tale did hear—
 Of true heart would he do thee service, if such service shall be thy will,
 And help at thine hand he seeketh that thy love may his torment still.
 It is well that a king face peril, if his lady shall be a queen,
 And *thou* art the maid whom he loveth, if King Lot hath thy father been;
 Thou art she for whom his heart weepeth, if thy name shall Itonjé be,
 And sorrow of heart dost thou give him—By my mouth would he plead with thee.'

'Now if thou be true and faithful of his woe wilt thou make an end,
 And *both* would I serve right gladly—This ring he to thee doth send,
 I prithee to take it, Lady! In sooth do I mean thee well,
 And if thou wilt trust unto me no word of the tale I'll tell!'

Then crimson she blushed, the maiden, and e'en as her lips were red
 So red grew her cheek, yet the blushes as they came so they swiftly sped.
 And she stretched forth her hand so shyly toward the little ring of gold,
 For e'en at a glance she knew it, and her hand did the token hold.
 Then she spake, 'Now, Sir Knight, I see well, if I freely to thee may speak,
 That thou comest from him, whom, desiring, my heart doth for ever seek.
 My words shalt thou still hold secret, as courtesy biddeth thee,
 This ring have I seen aforetime, for it oft hath been sent to me;
 From the hand of the king it cometh, and I know it for token true,
 From my hand did he first receive it. What sorrow so e'er he knew,
 Of that do I hold me guiltless; what he asked, that in thought I gave,
 Had we met I had ne'er withholden the boon he from me did crave.'

'This day have I kissed Orgelusé, who thinketh his death to win,
 I ween 'twas the kiss of Judas which all men count to him for sin!
 And honour and faith forsook me, when the Turkowit, brave Florand,
 And Gowerzein's Duke, fair Lischois, I kissed here at thy command.
 From my heart I might not forgive them, for my true love they hate alway—
 But speak thou no word to my mother.' Thus the maiden Gawain did pray.
 'Sir Knight, it was *thou* didst pray me to take from their lips this kiss,
 Tho' no will for forgiveness had I, and my heart sickeneth sore for this!
 If joy shall be e'er our portion, our help in thine hand shall be,
 And I know well, above all women, the king he desireth me;
 And his will shall he have, for I love him o'er all men on earth that live—
 God send thee good help and good counsel, that joy thou to us mayst give!'

Quoth Gawain, 'How may that be, Lady? He beareth thee in his heart,
 And in thine dost thou ever hold him, and yet are ye twain apart.
 If I knew how to give thee counsel that ye twain might in gladness dwell,
 Of a sooth no pains would I spare me such rede unto thee to tell.'

Then she quoth, 'Yet in truth shalt thou rule us, myself, and my gallant king,
 And naught but thy help and God's blessing our love to its goal may bring,
 So that I, poor homeless maiden, his sorrow may put away,
 For his joy shall be set upon me! If so be I from truth ne'er stray,
 What other can I desire here, or for what shall my true heart yearn,
 Save to give him the love he asketh, and his grief unto gladness turn?'

Gawain, he saw well that the maiden would fain to her love belong,
 Yet her hatred towards the Duchess as aforetime was fierce and strong;
 Thus hatred and love did she bear here, and wrong had he done the maid
 Who thus, of a true heart simply, her plaint had before him laid.
 Since never a word had he told her how one mother had borne them both,
 And King Lot he had been their father—Then he answered her, little loth,

He would do what he might to aid her, and in secret with gracious word
She thanked him who brought her comfort, and her sorrow with kindness heard.
Now the hour it was come, and they brought there for the tables fair linen white,
And bread did they bear to the palace unto many a lady bright,
And there might ye see a severance, for the knights they sat by one wall,
Apart from the maids; and their places Gawain gave to each and all.
And the Turkowit sat beside him, and Lischois ate with Sangivé,
(And that fair queen was Gawain's mother,) and Orgelusé by Arnivé.
And Gawain set his lovely sister by his side at that festal board,
And all did as he bade them gladly, for he was that castle's lord.
My skill not the half doth tell me, no such master-cook am I,
That I know the name of the viands they offered them courteously;
The host, and each one of the ladies, their servers were maidens fair,
To the knights who sat over against them many squires did their portion bear.
For this was the seemly custom, that no squire, in his serving haste,
Brushed roughly against a maiden, but ever apart they paced—
And whether 'twas wine, or 'twas viands, they offered unto the guests,
In naught was their courtesy harmèd, for so did men deem it best.
And a feast they to-day must look on such as no man before had seen,
Since vanquished by Klingsor's magic both lady and knight had been.
Unknown were they yet to each other, tho' one portal it shut them in,
And never a man and a maiden might speech of each other win;
And a good thing Gawain he thought it that this folk should each other meet,
And much he rejoiced in their gladness, and his own lot it seemed him sweet;
Yet ever he looked in secret on his lady and love so fair,
And his heart it waxed hot within him, and love's anguish he needs must bear.
But the day drew near to its closing, and faint waxed the waning light,
And fair thro' the clouds of heaven gleamed the messengers of the night,
Many stars so bright and golden, who speed on their silent way
When the night would seek for shelter in the realm of departing day;
And after her standard-bearers, with her host doth she swiftly tread—
Now many a fair crown golden in the palace hung high o'erhead,
And with tapers they all were lighted around the stately hall,
And they bare unto every table a host of tapers tall;
And yet the story telleth that the Duchess she was so fair,
That ne'er was it night in her presence tho' never a torch were there!
For her glance was so bright and radiant it brought of itself the day;
And this tale of fair Orgelusé full oft have I heard men say.
He had spoken, methinks, untruly who said that he e'er had seen
A host so rich and joyous, and joyous his guests, I ween;
And ever with eager gladness each knight and each gentle maid
Looked well on each other's faces, nor shrank from the glance afraid.
If friendship they here desired, or each other would better know,
Then naught of their joy would I grudge them, methinks it were better so!
Tho' I wot well there none was a glutton, yet still had they ate their fill,
And they bare on one side the tables, and Gawain asked, with right goodwill,
If here there should be a fiddler? and many a gallant squire
Was skilled on the strings, and gladly would play at the host's desire,
Yet were they not all too skilful, and the dances were old alway,
Not new, as in fair Thuringia the dances they know to-day.
Then they thanked their host who, joyful, would give to their joy its vent,
And many a lovely lady in his presence danced well content,
For goodly their dance to look on, and their ranks, with many a pair
Of knight and lady, mingled, and grief fled from their faces fair.
And oft 'twixt two gentle maidens might be seen a noble knight,

And they who looked well upon them in their faces might read delight.
 And whatever knight bethought him, and would of his lady pray
 Reward, if for love he served her, none said to his pleading Nay.
 Thus they who were poor in sorrow, and rich in joy's fairest dower,
 With sweet words, by sweet lips spoken, made gladsome the passing hour.
 Gawain and the Queen Arnivé, and Sangivé, the dance so fleet
 Would look on in peace, for they danced not; then the Duchess she took her seat
 By the side of Gawain, and her white hand he held in his own a while,
 And they spake of this thing and the other, with many a glance and smile;
 He rejoiced that she thus had sought him, and his grief it waxed small and faint,
 And his joy it grew strong and mighty, nor vexed him with sorrow's plaint.
 And great was the joy of the lady o'er the dance, and the merry feast,
 Yet less was the sorrow of Gawain, and his joy o'er her joy increased.
 Then spake the old Queen Arnivé, 'Sir Knight, now methinks 'twere best
 That thou get thee to bed, for sorely, I ween, shall thy wounds need rest
 Has the Duchess perchance bethought her to care for thy couch this night,
 And tend thee herself, with such counsel and deed as shall seem her right?'
 Quoth Gawain, 'That thyself mayst ask her; I will do as shall please ye twain!'
 Then the Duchess she spake in answer, 'He shall in my charge remain.
 Let this folk to their couch betake them, I will tend in such sort his rest
 That never a loving lady dealt better by gallant guest;
 And the other twain, my princes, in the care of the knights shall be,
 Florand, and the Duke of Gowerzein, for so seemeth it good to me.'
 In short space the dance was ended, and the maidens in beauty bright
 Sat here and there, and between them sat many a gallant knight;
 And joy took her revenge on sorrow, and he who so sweetly spake
 Words of love, from his gentle lady must a gracious answer take.
 Then the host must they hear, as he bade them the cup to the hall to bear,
 And the wooers bemoaned his bidding; yet the host he wooed with them here,
 And he bare of his love the burden, and the sitting he deemed too long,
 For his heart by love's power was tortured with anguish so fierce and strong.
 And they drank the night-drink, and sadly to each other they bade goodnight,
 And the squires they must bear before them full many a taper bright.
 And the two gallant guests did Gawain commend to them each and all,
 And glad were the knights, and the heroes they led forth from out the hall.
 And the Duchess, with gracious kindness, wished fair rest to the princes twain,
 And then to their sleeping chambers forth wended the maiden train,
 And as their fair breeding bade them, at the parting they curtsyed low:
 Queen Sangivé and her fair daughters they too to their rest would go.
 Then Bené, the maid, and Arnivé, they wrought with a willing hand
 That the host he might sleep in comfort, nor the Duchess aside did stand,
 But she aided the twain, and Gawain was led of the helpers three
 To a chamber fair where his slumber that even should joyful be.
 Two couches alone did he see there, but no man to me hath told
 Of their decking, for other matters, I ween, doth this story hold.
 Quoth Arnivé unto the Duchess, 'Now, Lady, think thou how best
 This knight whom thou broughtest hither, shall beneath this roof-tree rest,
 If aid at thine hand he craveth, to grant it shall honour thee;
 No more would I say, save this only, his wounds they shall bandaged be
 With such skill he might bear his armour—But if he bemoan his grief
 Then methinks it were good and fitting that thou bring to his woe relief.
 If thou wakest anew his courage, then we all in his gladness share—
 Now think thou no ill of my counsel, but have for thy knight good care!'
 Then the Queen Arnivé left them, (yet leave had she craved before,)
 And Bené she bare the taper, and Gawain he made fast the door.

If the twain to their love gave hearing? The tale how should I withhold,
 I would speak, were it not unseemly that love's secrets aloud be told,
 For courtesy doth forbid it; and he who would tell the tale
 Worketh ill to himself, o'er love's dealings true hands ever draw the veil.
 Now betwixt his love and his lady had the joy of Gawain waxed small,
 An the Duchess would have no pity, then healing might ne'er befall.
 They who sat in the seat of the wise men, and knew many a mystic word,
 Kancor, and Thèbit, and Trebuchet, the smith who Frimutel's sword
 Once wrought, ('twas a wondrous weapon, and men of its marvels tell)—
 Nay, all the skill of physicians, tho' they meant to the hero well
 And plied him with roots well mingled—Had a *woman* ne'er sought his side,
 Then vain were their skill, in his torment methinks had he surely died!
 Fain would I make short the story, he the rightful root had found
 That helped him unto his healing, and the chain of his grief unbound,
 And brought light in the midst of his darkness—(Breton by his mother's side
 Was Gawain, and King Lot his father) thus the healing task he plied,
 And sweet balsam for bitter sorrow was his lot till the dawn of day.
 Yet that which had wrought him comfort it was hid from the folk alway,
 But all there, both knights and ladies, they beheld him so gay and glad
 That their sorrow was put far from them and their heart was no longer sad.
 Now list how he did the message whom Gawain he had sent afar,
 Yea unto the land of Löver, unto Bems by the fair Korka,
 For there he abode, King Arthur, and his lady, the gracious queen,
 With fair maids and a host of vassals; this the lot of the squire had been.
 'Twas yet in the early morning, when his message he fain had brought,
 And the queen, in the chapel kneeling, on the page of her psalter thought;
 Then the squire bent his knee before her, and he gave her a token fair,
 For she took from his hand a letter, and the cover must writing bear
 That was writ by a hand she knew well, ere yet she the name might know,
 From the squire, of him who had sent him, as she looked on him kneeling low.
 Then the queen she spake to the letter, 'Now blessed that hand shall be
 That wrote thee; for care was my portion since the day that mine eyes might see
 The hand that hath writ this writing'—She wept, yet for joy was fain,
 And she quoth to the squire, 'Of a surety thy master shall be Gawain!'
 'Yea, Lady, he truly offers true service as aye of yore,
 With never a thought of wavering, yet his joy it shall suffer sore,
 If so be thou wilt not upraise it; and never it stood so ill
 With his honour as now it standeth—And more would he tell thee still,
 In joy shall he live henceforward if comfort he gain from thee;
 And I wot that yet more shall be written than what thou hast heard from me.'
 Then she quoth, 'I have truly read there the cause that hath brought thee here,
 And service I think to do him with many a woman dear,
 Who to-day shall I ween be reckoned to have won to them beauty's prize—
 Save Parzival's wife and another, Orgelúsé, in all men's eyes,
 Thro' Christendom none shall be fairer—Since far from King Arthur's court
 Gawain rode, sore grief and sorrow have made of my life their sport.
 And Meljanz de Lys hath told me he saw him in Barbigöl—
 Alas!' quoth the queen, 'that ever mine eyes saw thee, Plimizöl!
 What sorrow did there befall me! Since that day might I never greet
 Kunnewaare of Lalande, she hath left me, my friend and companion sweet.
 And the right of the good Round Table was broken by words of scorn,
 And four years and a half and six weeks have left us, I ween, forlorn,
 Since the Grail Parzival rode seeking; and after him rode Gawain
 To Askalon—Nor Jeschuté nor Hekuba come again
 Since the day that they parted from me, and grief for my friends so true

Hath driven my peace far from me, nor joy since that day I knew!
 And the queen spake much of her sorrow: then the squire would her counsel know,
 'Now do thou in this my bidding, in secret thou hence shalt go,
 And wait till the sun be higher, and the folk all at court shall be,
 Knights, servants, and gentle ladies, and vassals of all degree;
 And then to the court ride swiftly, nor think who shall hold thy steed,
 But spring from its back, and hasten where the king shall thy coming heed.
 They will ask of thee news of venture, but thou, do thou act and speak
 As one who from peril flieth, whom the flames would devouring seek,
 And they may not prevail to hold thee, nor win from thy lips the tale,
 But press thou thro' them to the monarch, and to greet thee he will not fail.
 Then give to his hand the letter, and swiftly from it he'll read
 Thy tale, and thy lord's desiring; I doubt not the prayer he'll heed!
 'And this will I further rede thee, make thou thy request to me
 Where I sit, and, amid my ladies, thy dealings may hear and see;
 And beseech us, as well thou knowest, for thy lord wouldst thou hearing gain.
 But say, for as yet I know not, where abideth the knight Gawain?'
 'Nay,' quoth the squire, 'I may not, ask not where my lord doth dwell,
 But think, an thou wilt, that good fortune is his, and he fareth well!'
 Then glad was the squire of her counsel, and he took from the queen his way
 In such wise as ye here have hearkened, and he came, e'en as she did say.
 For e'en at the hour of noontide, not in secret but openly
 He came to the court, and the courtiers his garments eyed curiously,
 And they thought that they well beseemed him, and were such as a squire should wear,
 And his horse on each flank was wounded, where the spurs they had smitten fair.
 And, e'en as the queen had taught him, he sprang straightway unto the ground,
 And a crowd of eager courtiers pressed, thronging, his steed around.
 Mantle, sword, and spurs, e'en his charger might be lost, he would little care
 But he gat thro' the crowd to the heroes, and the knights they besought him there,
 Brought he news of some gallant venture? For the custom was aye of yore,
 That they ate not, nor man nor maiden, save unto the court they bore
 The news of some deed of knighthood, and the court might claim its right,
 If so be 'twas a worthy venture, and one that beseemed a knight.
 Quoth the squire, 'Nay, I naught may tell ye, for my haste doth not brook delay,
 Of your courtesy then forgive me, and lead to the king the way,
 For 'tis meet that I first speak with him, and mine haste it doth work me ill;
 But my tale shall ye hear, and God teach ye to aid me with right goodwill!'
 And so did his message urge him he thought not on the thronging crowd,
 Till the eyes of the king beheld him, and greeting he spake aloud.
 Then he gave to his hand the letter that bade to King Arthur's heart,
 As he read it, two guests, joy and sorrow, alike there the twain had part
 And he spake, 'Hail! the fair day's dawning, by whose light I have read this word,
 And of thee, O son of my sister, true tidings at last have heard!
 If in manhood I may but serve thee as kinsman and friend, if faith
 Ever ruled my heart, 'twill be open to the word that Sir Gawain saith!'
 Then he spake to the squire, 'Now tell me if Sir Gawain be glad at heart?'
 'Yea, sire, at thy will, with the joyful I ween shall he have his part,'
 (And thus quoth the squire in his wisdom,) 'yet his honour he sure shall lose,
 And no man fresh joy may give him, if thine aid thou shalt here refuse.
 At thy succour his gladness waxeth, and from out of dark sorrow's door
 Shall grief from his heart be banished, if thou hearken his need so sore.
 As of yore doth he offer service to the queen, and it is his will
 That the knights of the good Round Table as their comrade account him still,
 And think on their faith, nor let him be 'spoiled of his honour's meed,
 But pray thee his cry to hearken, and make to his aid good speed!'

Quoth King Arthur, 'Dear friend and comrade, bear this letter unto the queen,
 Let her read therein, and tell us why our portion hath twofold been,
 And at one while we joy and we sorrow. How King Gramoflanz is fain
 In the pride of his heart, and his malice, to work ill to my knight, Gawain;
 He thinketh for sure that my nephew shall be Eidegast, whom he slew,
 Thence grief hath he won; deeper sorrow I'd teach him, and customs new!'
 Then the squire he would pass where a welcome so kindly he did receive,
 And he gave to the queen the letter, and many an eye must grieve,
 And with crystal tears run over, as with sweet lips she read so clear
 The words that within were written, and the need of Gawain they hear,
 And his prayer did she read before them; nor long would the squire delay
 With skill to entreat the ladies, and aid at their hand to pray.
 King Arthur, Sir Gawain's uncle, he wrought with a hearty will
 That his vassals might take the journey: nor did she abide her still,
 Guinevere, the wise and the courteous, for she prayed them make no delay,
 Her ladies, but bravely deck them, and get on their stately way.
 Quoth Kay aloud in his anger, 'If ever I dared believe
 That so gallant a man as Gawain of Norway on earth should live
 I would cry to him, "Come thou nearer!" Fetch him swift, else he swift will go,
 As a squirrel away he flasheth, and is lost ere his place ye know!'
 To the queen quoth the squire, 'Now, Lady, my lord must I swiftly seek,
 His cause do I leave to thine honour!' To her chamberlain did she speak,
 'See thou that this squire doth rest well, and look well unto his steed,
 Is it hewn with spurs, find another, the best that shall serve his need.
 And what else beside shall fail him, for his dress, or lest pledge he lose,
 Make ready as he shall ask thee, and naught unto him refuse!'
 And she quoth, 'Thou shalt say unto Gawain, I am ever to serve him fain,
 Thy leave from the king will I care for, he greeteth thy lord again!'
 Thus the king he was fain for the journey; and the feast it might now be served,
 Since the right of the good Round Table by this venture was well observed;
 And joy in their hearts awakened, since this gallant knight Gawain
 Should be yet in life, and true tidings they might of his welfare gain.
 And the knights of that noble order, that even were glad at heart,
 And there sat the king, and those others who had in the ring their part,
 And they sat and they ate with their monarch who fame by their strife had won,
 And the news of this gallant venture wrought joy to them every one.
 Now the squire might betake him homewards, since his errand so well had sped,
 He gat forth at the early dawning, ere the sun should be high o'erhead,
 And the queen's chamberlain he gave him a charger, and robes beside,
 And gold lest his pledge be forfeit, and glad on his way he hied,
 For had he not won from King Arthur what should end his lord's sorrow sore?
 And I know not the days of his journey, but in safety he came once more
 To Château Merveil; then joyful was Arnivé, for as she bade
 The porter bare news of his coming, how his steed he no whit had stayed,
 But swiftly had done his errand. Then in secret she made her way
 To where by the castle drawbridge the squire did his charger stay,
 And she asked him much of his journey, and why he in haste must ride?
 Quoth the squire, 'Tis forbidden, Lady! my errand I needs must hide,
 An oath have I sworn of silence, and my lord he might well be wroth
 If to thee I should tell the tidings, for so should I break mine oath,
 And a fool would he surely hold me! Ask himself what thou fain wouldst learn!'
 Yet she strove still with many a question from his purpose the squire to turn,
 Then weary was he of her pleading, and in anger this word he spake,
 'Without cause dost thou here delay me, for I think not mine oath to break!'
 So he went where he found his master, and the Turkowit brave Florand,

And Liscois, and the lady of Logrois, many ladies did with them stand,
 And the squire made his way to his master, and up stood the knight Gawain,
 And he took him aside, and welcome he bade him in joyful strain,
 'Now tell unto me, my comrade, the tidings thou here hast brought,
 If thy news be for joy or for sorrow, what speak they of me at court?'
 'And say, didst thou find King Arthur?' quoth the squire, 'My master, yea,
 The king, and the queen, and with them many brave knights I saw alway,
 And they offer to thee their service, and they will at thy bidding come,
 And they heard in such sort thy message, with such gladness, that every one,
 Rich and poor, as one man were joyful when I spake, thou wert safe and well.
 And the folk there were sure a marvel! Their number I may not tell!
 And the Table Round, by thy message, was spread for the feast I ween;
 And if knight e'er won fame by his valour, then I wot that thy fame hath been
 Far greater than all who hearkened to the words that I spake of thee,
 And it beareth the crown o'er all others, tho' mighty their fame shall be!'
 Then he told him all that befell there, how he spake with the gracious queen,
 And the counsel she gave unto him; and how he the folk had seen,
 Those brave knights and gentle ladies; how Gawain should behold their face
 At Ioflanz, before the combat, and the end of his day of grace.
 And the sorrow of Gawain vanished, yet his joy in his heart he'd hide,
 Tho' from grief did he pass to gladness; yet the squire must his oath abide
 And yet for a space keep silence—Forgotten was all his care,
 And thither he went, and he sat him again by his lady fair,
 And with joy he abode in the castle till King Arthur to his relief
 Might come with his host—Now hearken to a story of love and grief:
 Gawain he was ever joyful; one morn did it so befall
 That many a knight and lady were seen in that stately hall,
 And Gawain sat apart in a window, and looked o'er the stream so wide,
 And with many a tale of wonder sat Arnivé the knight beside.
 To the queen spake the gallant hero, 'Ah! hearken, my Lady dear,
 If my questions they shall not vex thee, do thou to my words give ear
 And tell me the wondrous story, which as yet shall be hid from me—
 That I live, and my life is joyful, I owe it to none but thee;
 Tho' my heart had the wit of manhood, yet the Duchess she held it fast,
 But thou in such wise hast helped me that my sorrow is overpast;
 Of my love, and my wounds had I died here, but with wisdom thy helpful hand
 Thou didst stretch to my aid, and hast loosed me for aye from my sorrow's band.
 I owe thee my life! My Lady of healing, now tell to me
 The wonder that was, and the marvel that yet in this place shall be.
 Say, wherefore by mighty magic hath Klingsor this palace made?
 For surely my life had I lost here had thy wisdom not been mine aid!'
 Then out quoth the wise Arnivé, (and ne'er with such goodly fame
 Of womanly faith and wisdom fair youth unto old age came,)
 'Sir Knight, these are but small marvels to the marvels his cunning hand,
 And his skill in hidden magic, have wrought in full many a land.
 He who counteth it shame unto us that into his power we fell,
 He sinneth for sure! His doings, Sir Knight, I to thee will tell.
 Many folk, I ween, hath he troubled, his land is Terre de Labûr:
 From a wondrous race he springeth, whose marvels they aye endure,
 For Virgil was his forefather, in Naples his spells he wrought:
 And in this wise his nephew Klingsor was to shame and to sorrow brought;
 'And the chief of his towns was Capua—such high fame was his, I ween,
 That never in praise or in honour methinks had he shamèd been,
 And all folk they spake of Duke Klingsor, and praised him, both man and maid,
 Till in this wise he won dishonour, and his glory to earth was laid.

In Sicily reigned a monarch, King Ibert, his life was blest
 With a fair wife, Iblis, none fairer e'er hung on a mother's breast,
 And Klingsor would do her service, till her love should be his reward,
 And in shame did he win his guerdon from the hand of her rightful lord.
 'If here I must tell his secret, forgiveness I first must pray,
 For methinks it shall be a story that scarce fitteth my lips to say;
 With a stroke was he made magician, with the self-same stroke unmanned'—
 Then loudly he laughed, Sir Gawain, as the tale he must understand.
 'In Kalot Enbolot's castle he won him this lasting shame,
 (I trow 'tis a mighty fortress, and far lands shall know its fame,)
 With his wife did the monarch find him, there lay Klingsor within her arm,
 And sorely must he repent him of his slumber so soft and warm,
 For the hand of the king avenged him in such wise as he deemed his right;
 And he left with his knife such token of shame on the traitor knight
 That henceforward the love of woman it rejoiceth him never more!
 And I wot well for his dishonour many folk shall have suffered sore.'
 '('Tis not in the land of Persia) in a city called Persida
 Were magic spells first woven; it stands in a land afar,
 And thither did Klingsor journey, and there did he learn such skill,
 That with secrets of magic cunning he worketh whate'er he will.
 For the ill that was wrought his body he beareth goodwill to none,
 But rejoiceth to work them evil, the more if they fame have won.'
 'E'en such peril beset one monarch—Irôt was, I ween, his name,
 And Rosch-Sabbins was his kingdom—At length to such pass he came,
 That he bade him to take of that country what he would, so he peace would keep;
 Then Klingsor he took of the monarch this mountain so high and steep,
 And the land for eight miles around it; on the summit did Klingsor rear
 The wonder-work thou seest, and this palace we look on here.
 And there faileth nor worldly riches, nor marvel of magic skill,
 If for thirty years one besieged it, methinks 'twere provisioned still.
 And power doth he hold o'er all spirits, 'twixt the earth and the heaven above,
 Both evil and good, save those only whom God doth from his power remove.'
 'Sir Knight, since thy deadly peril thou hast passed, nor thy death hast found,
 He gives to thine hand his kingdom, this Burg, and the lands around,
 No claim doth he make upon it; and peace doth he promise thee—
 This he sware in the ears of his people, and a man of his word is he,
 That the knight who withstood the venture, this gift should be his for aye.
 And all who from Christendom's countries 'neath the spell of his magic lay,
 Be they woman, or man, or maiden, are thy vassals both one and all,
 And many from lands of paynim with us 'neath his power must fall.
 Let this folk then now get them homewards, where yet for our loss they mourn,
 For to dwell in the land of the stranger, it maketh my heart forlorn
 And He, who the stars hath counted, may He teach thee to give us aid,
 And turn once again to rejoicing those hearts that are sore afraid.'
 'A child was born of a mother, who its mother's mother shall be;
 For the ice it came of the water; when the sunlight shineth free,
 Then nothing I ween shall hinder that water from ice be born—
 Of my glad youth I often think me, tho' now I must weep forlorn,
 If my lot shall once more be joyful then the child from the child shall spring.
 And thou, art thou wise and courteous, methinks well mayst work this thing!'
 'Tis long since all joy forsook me! The skiff 'neath its sail flies fast,
 But the man who doth sail within it hath swifter his voyage o'erpast.
 If thou readest aright my riddle thy fame shall wax high and fleet,
 For our joy canst thou make to blossom, and our song to ring clear and sweet.

And, bringers of joy, shall we journey into many a distant land,
 Where the folk weep sore for our losing, and shall greet us with outstretched hand!
 'Of joy had I once full measure: a crownèd queen was I!
 And my daughter amid her princes bare a crown too right royally,
 And all men they deemed us worthy—Sir Knight, I wrought ill to none,
 But alike, both man and maiden, from my hand due guerdon won.
 And all men they knew, and they owned me one fit o'er the folk to reign,
 For I, so God gave me wisdom, ne'er brought to another pain.
 Yet she who in gladness dwelleth, tho' a fair praise she think to earn,
 And the prayer of the poor she hearken, yet her joy to such grief may turn
 That a poor lad may make her joyful—Sir Knight, here o'erlong I stay,
 Yet there cometh no man who doth know me, and turneth my care away!
 Then out quoth the gallant hero, 'Lady, if life be mine,
 Then gladness shall be thy portion, nor shalt thou in exile pine.'
 Now this self-same day brought the coming of Arthur the Breton king,
 The son of the sad Arnivé, whom kinship and faith did bring;
 And many a fair new banner Gawain from the castle saw,
 And the field it was thick with the horsemen who near at his summons draw.
 On the road that wound hence from Logrois came many a blazoned spear,
 And Gawain, he was glad at their coming; for delay it oft teacheth fear,
 Who waiteth o'erlong for succour, he doubteth 'twill come too late!
 From such doubt had King Arthur freed him! Ah me! how he rode in state!
 Gawain, he would hold it secret, yet his eyes they were fain to weep,
 Little good had they been for cisterns, since the water they failed to keep.
 And for love must he weep, for Arthur such love had toward him shown,
 He had cherished him from his childhood, and had dealt with him as his own;
 And the twain they had never wavered, but their faith to each other kept,
 And nor falsehood nor thought of doubting betwixt their two hearts had crept.
 But Arnivé was 'ware of his weeping, and quoth, 'Now shalt thou begin
 To joy with the shout of rejoicing, thus comfort we all shall win.
 'Gainst sorrow shouldst thou defend thee—See the host that now draweth nigh,
 Methinks 'tis the Duchess' army, with their coming shall joy wax high.'
 Now many a tent and banner they saw wind across the plain,
 But *one* shield did they bear before them, and Arnivé beheld again,
 And she knew, as of yore, the blazon, and Isayé she called the name
 Of the knight, he should be king's marshal, and Uther Pendragon came!
 But the shield it was borne by another, graceful of limb and tall,
 And she said, 'He shall be *queen's* marshal, and *Maurin* his name they call.'
 But little she knew, Arnivé, that dead were both king and knight,
 And Maurin, he held the office that afore was his father's right.
 To the bank in the meadow of conflict rode the host—They who served the queen
 Found a resting-place for the ladies, and a fair camp it was I ween.
 By the side of a swift, clear streamlet they set up the tents so fair,
 And, apart, many goodly circles for the king and his knights prepare.
 And methinks they had left behind them, wherever the host must ride,
 A mighty track of hoof-prints on the field and the roadways wide!
 Gawain, by the mouth of Bené, his host Plippalinòt prayed
 To hold vessel and boat in safe keeping that no crossing that day be made.
 And the maid from the hand of Gawain took the first gift of his rich store,
 'Twas a swallow, the harp was costly, such as harpers in England bore.
 Then joyful, she sought her father, and Gawain, he gave command
 To shut fast the outer portals, since a host at the gate did stand;
 And old and young they listed the word that he courteous spake:
 'On the further side of the river an army its camp doth make,

And never, by land or by water, a mightier host I saw,
Would they fight, then I pray ye help me my knighthood to prove once more!’
With one voice did they make the promise—Then they asked of the Duchess fair,
If the host should be hers? But she answered, ’Believe me, of all men there
I know neither shield nor bearer; perchance he who wrought me ill
Hath entered my land, and thought him to bow Logrois unto his will.
He hath found it right well defended! My people might well defy,
From their tower and their battlements lofty, e’en such army as here doth lie!
Hath he wrought there fresh deeds of knighthood, then King Gramoflanz sure hath thought
To revenge himself for the garland that my knight from his tree hath brought.
But whoever they be, I know well, they shall many a joust have seen,
And many a spear at Logrois by mine army hath splintered been.’
And never a lie had she spoken—For Arthur must peril face
As he rode thro’ the land of Logrois; and many of Breton race
In knightly joust had fallen—But Arthur their ill repaid
In the self-same coin, and on both sides sore stress on the host was laid.
Battle-weary, so came they hither of whom one full oft must hear
That they sold their lives full dearly, and did never a foeman fear.
And either side had suffered, both Garel and Gaherjet,
King Meljanz of Lys, and Iofreit, son of Idol, in durance set
Ere even the end of the Tourney—From Logrois they captive bare
The Duke of Vermandois, Friam, and Count Richard, he of Nevers,
Who naught but one spear had needed ere he against whom he rode
Had fallen ’neath his stroke so mighty, and no man his joust abode.
With his own hand King Arthur made him his captive, this gallant knight;
Then, dauntless, they spurred them onward, and the armies they met in fight,
And a forest, methinks, it cost them! For no man the jousts might know
That were ridden, a rain of splinters fell thick at each mighty blow;
And the Bretons, they bore them bravely ’gainst the Lady of Logrois’ host,
And Arthur himself the rear-guard would keep at sore conflict’s cost.
And in this wise they fought and they vexed them through the hours of the livelong day,
Till the greater part of the army outwearied with conflict lay.
And well might Gawain have told her, the Duchess, that to his aid
They had ridden her land, then, I wot well, no strife had their way delayed,
But he would that no lips should tell her till her own eye the truth had seen—
Then he dealt as should well befit him had King Arthur his foeman been,
And made ready to march against him with rich tents and warlike gear.
And no man of them all repented that he came as a stranger here,
For with open hand Sir Gawain his gifts upon all did shower
In such wise that ye might have deemed well he drew nigh to his dying hour.
And servant, and knight, and lady, they looked on his gifts so fair,
And all, with one mouth, they praised him who brought help in their sore
despair;
And all, for his sake, were joyful—Then the hero he bade prepare
Strong chargers, and well-trained palfreys, such as well might a lady bear.
Nor the knights should be lacking armour—Strong squires in coat of mail
Were ready to do his bidding, nor should one of their number fail.
And in this wise he gave his orders, four knights he aside did take:
His chamberlain one; and another, cup-bearer he fain would make;
The third he would make his steward; and his marshal the fourth should be,
For this was his prayer, and the four knights said ’Yea’ to him willingly.
At peace lay King Arthur’s army, and no greeting did Gawain send,
Yet I wot well it sorely grieved him! With the morning the host did wend,
With the blast of many a trumpet, their way unto Ioflanz’ plain,
And the rear-guard was armed, yet no foeman did they find in their path again.

Then Gawain took his office-bearers, and in this wise to them he spake,
 The marshal, he bade him straightway to Ioflanz his way to take,
 'There a camp of my own prepare me—The host that thou here didst see
 Shall unto that plain have ridden, and its lord will I name to thee,
 For 'tis well that thou too shouldst know him, he is Arthur, my kinsman true,
 In whose court and whose care from my childhood I unto my manhood grew.
 Now do this thing in which I trust thee, rule my journey in such a wise,
 With such riches and pomp, that my coming be stately in all men's eyes;
 But within the walls of this castle no word of the truth be told—
 That the king for my sake cometh hither, this must thou for secret hold!'

So did they as Gawain bade them, and Plippalinòt he found
 Little space had he now for leisure, since his lord was on journey bound.
 For large and small his vessels, both boat and skiff, must fare
 O'er the water, and troops well armèd, ahorse and afoot they bare.
 And the marshal the squires and footmen on the track of the Bretons led,
 And hither and thither riding behind them the army sped.
 And they bare with them, so 'twas told me, the tent that in days of yore
 Fair Iblis had sent to Klingsor, as pledge of the love she bore.
 By the sending of this love-token their secret to men was told,
 And the favour they bare each other in the days that have waxen old.
 And no cost had they spared who had wrought it, and no better was ever seen
 Save the tent of Eisenhart only—Then apart on the grass so green
 They set up the tent, and around it many others in goodly ring,
 And so great was the pomp and the riches that men deemed it a wondrous thing.
 And they spake before King Arthur that the marshal of Gawain came,
 And his lord the same day would follow, and encamp him upon the plain.
 'Twas the talk of all the vassals—Then Gawain, from falsehood free,
 Rode forth from his home and there followed a goodly company.
 And their train was so richly ordered that marvels I here might tell!
 With church gear and chamber hangings the pack-steeds were burdened well;
 And some were with harness laden, and above the harness bare
 Full many a crested helmet, and shield that was blazoned fair.
 And many a gallant war-horse was led by the bridle rein,
 And behind them both knight and lady rode close in the glittering train.
 Would ye measure the length? a mile long, methinks, had it stretched, and more,
 And Sir Gawain, I ween, forgat not that a gallant knight should draw
 His rein by the side of each lady, and ever of love they spake,
 Or one scant of wit had deemed them! And in this wise the road they take,
 The Turkowit, brave Florand, for companion upon his way
 Had the daughter of Queen Arnivé, Sangivé of Norrøway,
 And Lischois, who was ne'er unready, he rode at sweet Kondrie's side,
 And by Gawain the maid Itonjé, his sister, perforce must ride.
 At the same time the Queen Arnivé and the Duchess of fair Logrois
 Rode gaily the one by the other, for in such wise they made their choice.
 Beyond the camp of King Arthur the tents of Gawain they lay,
 And they who were fain to reach them thro' the army must take their way.
 'Twas a sight for all men to gaze at! Ere the folk to their journey's end
 Might come, of a courteous custom, to do honour unto his friend,
 Gawain by the tent of Arthur bade the first maiden take her stand,
 Then the marshal so did his office that the second, to her right hand,
 And the third beside the second, should unto each other ride,
 And none of them all delayed them—So made they a circle wide,
 Here the matrons, and there the maidens, and by each of them rode a knight
 Who would fain do the lady service, and would for her favours fight.
 And thus round the tent of the monarch stood the ladies, a goodly ring,

And to Gawain, the rich in gladness, fair welcome would Arthur bring.
To the ground sprang Gawain and Arnivé, and her daughters with children twain,
The Lady of Logrois, and the heroes he o'erthrew on the grassy plain,
Lischois and the gallant Florand; then unto those heroes brave
Stepped Arthur from his pavilion, and a kindly welcome gave;
And the queen, she greeted Gawain, and she welcomed him and his
Of true heart, and from many a lady, I ween, was there many a kiss!
Quoth Arthur unto his nephew, 'Say, who shall thy comrades be?'
Quoth Gawain, 'A kiss of greeting from my lady I fain would see,
'Twere ill an she should refuse it, for noble are both I ween.'
Then Florand and the Duke of Gowerzein were kissed by the gracious queen.
Then into the tent they gat them, and to many the fair field wide
Was as if it were full of maidens, so close stood they, side by side.
Then not as the heavy-footed sprang Arthur upon his steed,
And he turned to the knights and the ladies in the ring with a kindly heed,
And he rode from one to the other, and gracious the words he spake,
From the lips of the king so kindly each one must his welcome take.
For this was the will of Gawain that no man from hence should ride
Till he himself rode with them, but courteous his coming bide.
Then the king would dismount, and straightway he entered the tent again,
And he sat him beside his nephew, and straitly he prayed Gawain
To say who were these five ladies, whom hither the knight did bring.
Then Gawain he looked on the eldest and he spake to the Breton king,
'Didst thou know Uther Pendragon? 'Tis Arnivé, his queen and wife,
And well mayst thou look upon her, from the twain didst thou draw thy life.
And there standeth the Queen of Norway, and I am the son she bare,
And these twain they shall be my sisters; say, are they not maidens fair?'
Ah! then once again they kissed them, and sorrow and joy were seen
Of all those who looked upon them, from Love this their lot had been;
And they laughed, and they cried together, and their lips spake of joy and woe,
And I ween that with tears of gladness their bright eyes must overflow.
Then Arthur he spake to Gawain, 'Nephew, unknown to me
Is the fifth of these lovely ladies, I prithee who may she be?'
'The Duchess, is she, of Logrois,' quoth Gawain in his courtesy,
'In her service have I come hither, and, so it was told to me,
Thou thyself hast sought her dwelling, and how it rejoiced thee there,
Thou canst without shame declare us, as a widower dost thou fare.'
Quoth Arthur, 'She doth, as her captive, thy kinsman Gaheerjet hold,
And Garel, who in many a conflict hath shown h'm a hero bold;
From my very side was he taken, one charge had we made so nigh
That almost we gained the portal, when lo! from the gate did fly
Meljanz of Lys! How he battled! On high flew a banner white
And the host who fought beneath it took captive my gallant knight.
And the banner it bare a blazon of crimson, a bleeding heart,
And right through the midst was it pierced by the shaft of a sable dart,
As one who to death is smitten—'Lirivoin' was the battle-cry
Of the army who fought beneath it, and their hand did the victory buy.
My nephew, Iofreit, was taken, and grief for his sake I know—
Yestreen did I keep the rear-guard, and the chance it hath worked me woe!'
Sore mourned the king for his sorrow—quoth the Duchess, with courteous mien,
'Sire, I speak thee free of all shaming, I had greeted thee not, I ween.
Thou mayst well have wrought me evil, tho' no wrong had I done to thee,
And I would that God's wisdom teach thee that harm to make good to me.
The knight to whose aid thou camest, if combat with me he dared,
Hath found me, methinks, defenceless, with side to the foeman bared.

If yet for such strife he lusteth, nor of conflict hath had his fill,
 With never a sword or a weapon I think to withstand him still.
 Then Gawain, he quoth to King Arthur, 'Wilt thou that we fill the plain
 With knights? For we well can do so—I think me such grace to gain
 From the Duchess that all the captives from thine host she will swiftly free,
 And, many a new spear bearing, her knighthood we here may see.'
 'Yea, such were my will,' quoth Arthur; then the Duchess she gave command,
 And many a gallant hero she summoned from Logrois' land—
 And I wot well a host so goodly the earth ne'er had seen before—
 Then Gawain, he prayed leave of the monarch, he would to his tent withdraw,
 And the king's will was e'en as Gawain's, and all they who hither rode
 With the knight, they turned their bridles, and with him in his camp abode.
 And his tent was so rich and so goodly, as befitted a gallant knight,
 That afar from its costly trappings had poverty taken flight.
 And there rode unto his pavilion full many whose hearts were sore
 For the weary days since he left them, and the love they to Gawain bore.
 And the wounds of Kay had been healèd since he joustèd by Plimizöl,
 And he looked on the wealth of Gawain, and with envy his heart was full,
 And he quoth, 'Now, King Lot, his father, my monarch's near of kin,
 Ne'er thought with such pomp to shame us, nor a camp of his own would win.'
 (For ever did he bethink him how Gawain would no vengeance take
 On the knight who so sorely smote him, when his right arm in joust he brake.)
 'God worketh for *some* His wonders,—Who gave Gawain this woman folk?'
 And the words they were scarce a friend's words that Kay in his anger spoke.
 Of the honour his friend hath won him the true knight is ever glad,
 But the faithless, aloud he crieth, and his heart ever waxeth sad
 When the heart of his friend rejoiceth, and he needs must his gladness see.
 Bliss and honour had fallen to Gawain; and, if one would more favoured be,
 I know not what thing he may wish for! Thus ever the evil mind
 Is with envy filled, while the brave man his comfort and joy doth find
 When honour shall seek his comrade, and shame from his face doth flee—
 Gawain ne'er forgot his knighthood, and from falsehood was ever free;
 And thus it was right and fitting that men on his bliss should gaze,
 And gladness and fair rejoicing henceforward should crown his days.
 In what wise for the folk that followed did the knight of Norway care,
 Alike for his knights and ladies? Not ill was, methinks, their fare.
 And Arthur and all his people they looked on King Lot's fair son,
 And I trow well they greatly marvelled at the riches his hand had won.
 Now the evening meal was ended, and 'twas time for the folk to sleep,
 And little I grudge their slumber! A guard thro' the night they keep,
 And lo! at the early morning, ere the dawning had waxed to-day,
 Came a folk in goodly armour, and the men of Logrois were they.
 And they read their helmet's token by the light of the waning moon,
 On this side lay the host of Arthur, and his camp had they passed full soon,
 And they came to the goodly circle where Gawain and his men should lie—
 And, methinks, who such gallant succour by the might of his hand could buy
 Were reckoned of men a hero! Then Gawain bade his Marshal find
 A place for the host to camp on, but, such was their leader's mind,
 He deemed it best that their circle apart from the rest should be,
 And 'twas even the hour of noontide ere all were lodged fittingly.
 Then Arthur, the noble monarch, a message would straightway send;
 Unto Rosche Sabbins, and the city, a squire on his way should wend
 To King Gramoflanz should he speak thus, 'Since conflict the king doth pray,
 And he lusteth to fight my nephew, the strife shall he not delay,
 For Sir Gawain is fain to meet him—But bid him to meet us here,

As a gallant man do we know him, were he other, 'twould cost him dear!
 And the messenger of King Arthur he rode on his errand fain—
 Then forth, with Lischois and Sir Florand, rode the gallant knight, Gawain,
 And he prayed them to show them to him who from many a land afar
 Had ridden for love's high service, and had fought in his lady's war.
 And he met them and gave them greeting in such wise that the heroes knew
 Sir Gawain for courteous lover, and faithful knight and true.
 With that again he left them, and in secret his way he sped,
 And he gat him again to his chamber, and he armed him from foot to head;
 He would know if his wounds were healèd so that never a scar should pain,
 And his limbs would he test, since so many, both maiden and man were fain
 To look on the strife, had they wisdom they should see if his dauntless hand
 Might even to-day, as aforetime, the victor's crown command.
 A squire did he bid to bring him his charger, Gringuljet,
 And he sprang to the saddle lightly and the horse to a gallop set.
 He would try both himself and his charger, if ready for strife the twain—
 Ah! woe is me for his journey! so rode he upon the plain,
 And so had his Fortune willed it, that a knight his bridle drew
 By the side of the river Sabbins, and ye know that knight so true,
 And a rock, men well might call him, for manhood and courage high,
 And no knight might stand before him, and falsehood his heart did fly.
 And yet so weak was his body that no burden it bare of wrong,
 Yea, a hand's-breadth had been too heavy, and a finger-length too long!
 And, I ween, of this gallant hero of old time ye oft must hear,
 For my tale hath come to its root-tree, and draweth its goal anear.

BOOK XIV GRAMOFLANZ

If now the gallant Gawain a knightly joust would ride,
 Tho' never I feared for his honour yet I fear what may now betide.
 And tho' dear be the other's safety yet never a doubt I know,
 For he who in strife would face him an army had found for foe.
 O'er far seas, in the land of paynim, his helmet was fashioned fair,
 And ruby-red was his harness, and the trappings his charger bare.
 So rode he in search of adventure, and his shield it was piercèd thro'—
 He had plucked for his helm a garland, and the tree where the garland grew
 Was the tree that Gramoflanz guarded; and Gawain knew the wreath again,
 And he thought, did the king here wait him it were counted to him for shame,
 If hither for strife he had ridden then strife there perforce must be,
 Tho' alone were the twain, and no lady the fate of their jousting see.
 From Monsalväsche they came, the chargers, which each of the knights bestrode,
 And they spurred them alike to a gallop, and each 'gainst the other rode,
 On the dewy grass of the meadow, not the sand of the Tourney ring,
 Should the joust this morn be ridden; and I ween, as their deeds I sing,
 I had mourned for the harm of either—'Twas a fair joust they rode that morn,
 Of a race that fought fair and knightly was each gallant hero born;
 And little had been his winning, great his loss, who there won the prize,
 And ne'er had he ceased to mourn it, if he were in his calling wise.
 For faith had they pledged to each other, nor of old time, nor yet to-day,
 Had their love and their truth been wounded—Now hear how they fought the fray:
 Swiftly they rode, yet in such wise that each knight must mourn his fate—
 For kinsman and knightly brethren, in strength of foeman's hate,
 In strife had come together; and he who this joust should win
 His joy were the pledge of sorrow, and his deed must he count for sin—
 And each right hand it smote so surely that the comrades and foemen twain,
 With horse and with goodly harness, fell prone on the grassy plain.

And then in such wise they bear them, with their swords such blows they smite,
That their shields are hewn and riven, and cloven in deadly fight.
And the splinters of shields, and the grass blades, were mingled upon the ground,
And far other the look of the meadow ere their strife had its ending found;
And too long must they wait for a daysman—'twas early when first they fought,
And the hours sped by, and no man an end to their conflict brought,
And no man was there beside them—Will ye hear how, the self-same day,
King Arthur's knights to the army of King Gramoflanz made their way?
On a plain by the sea he camped him—On the one side of the ground
Flowed the Sabbins, and over against it the Poinzacleins its ending found.
And the plain it was strongly guarded; Rosche Sabbins the citadel,
With towers and with walls deep-moated, defended the fourth side well.
And the host on the plain lay stretching its length for a mile and more,
And half a mile broad had they deemed it—As the messengers toward it bore,
Many unknown knights rode forward, archers, squires, with arms and spear,
And behind them, with waving banners, did the mighty host draw near.
With ringing blasts of trumpet would the army leave the plain,
That very morn to Ioflanz marched the monarch and all his train.
And clear rung the ladies' bridles as they circled around the king—
And, if I may tell the story, the tidings I fain would bring
Of those who had ridden hither, and camped on the sward so green,
For Gramoflanz bade them hither, and his combat they fain had seen.
If ye shall not before have heard it then here would I make it known,
From Punt, the water-locked city, to his nephew's aid had flown
Brandelidelein, and with him were six hundred ladies fair,
By the side of each lovely lady her knight must his armour wear;
For knighthood and love would he serve her—Of Punturtois, the gallant knights
Were fain for this stately journey, in sooth 'twas a noble sight.
And there rode, an ye will believe me, Count Bernard of Riviers,
Rich Narant had been his father, and left Uckerland to his heir.
And in many a ship o'er the water had he brought so fair a host
Of ladies, that none gainsaid him who would make of their beauty boast.
Two hundred of them were maidens, and two hundred already wed—
And if I have rightly counted 'neath his banner Count Bernard led
Five hundred knights well proven, who with him had sailed the sea,
And each well might face a foeman, and each should a hero be.
Thus King Gramoflanz would wreak vengeance in strife for the broken tree,
For he deemed he should be the victor, and the folk should his prowess see.
And the princes from out his kingdom, with many a valiant knight,
And many a lovely lady, had come to behold the fight;
And a goodly folk were gathered—Now Arthur's men drew near,
And they looked upon the monarch, how they found him ye now shall hear.
Of Palmât was the high seat 'neath him, and with silk was the couch spread o'er,
And maidens, so fair and graceful, they knelt low the king before,
And with iron hose they shod him; and high o'er the monarch's head,
A silk, Ecidemon-woven, both broad and long, was spread,
On twelve spear-shafts tall was it lifted, from the sunlight to be a shade—
Then came the men of King Arthur, and this was the word they said:
'Sire, King Arthur hath hither sent us, and ever hath he been known
As one whom all men have honoured, and whom all shall as victor own.
Yea, honour enow is his portion—And yet wouldst thou mar his fame,
Since upon the son of his sister thou thinkest to bring this shame!
And e'en had Sir Gawain wrought thee worse ill by far, I ween,
That the fame of the great Round Table might here for a shield have been.
For brotherhood all have sworn him who sit at that noble board,

And stainless shall be their knighthood who own Arthur for king and lord!
 Quoth the king, 'The strife I sware him e'en to-day my hand shall dare,
 And Gawain to-day shall face me, if well or if ill he fare.
 For this hath been truly told me, that King Arthur draweth near
 With his queen, and his host of warriors; I bid them welcome here!
 Tho' it may be the angry Duchess shall counsel him to mine ill,
 Yet hearken and heed, ye children, the strife shall be foughten still.
 For here have I many a follower, and hindered of none will be,
 What *one* man can do unto me that bear I right joyfully!
 And if now I should fear to face that to which I my pledge have sworn,
 Of Love's service and Love's rewarding henceforward were I forlorn!
 In her favour I found aforetime my life and my life's best bliss—
 God knoweth how *he* hath pleased her, she oweth me much for this!—
 And tho' ever I did disdain me to fight with one man alone,
 Yet Gawain hath so bravely borne him that him as I my peer I'll own.
 And I think me I shame my manhood when such easy strife I fight;
 And yet have I fought, believe me, (ye can ask if it seem ye right,)
 With folk whom mine hand hath proven to be valiant men and true,
 But ne'er have I fought but *one* man! No praise shall be here my due,
 From the lips of gracious women, tho' the victory be mine to-day—
 And greatly my heart rejoiceth that her bands have been reft away
 For whose sake I fight this conflict; so many a distant land
 Are vassals unto King Arthur, and pay tribute unto his hand,
 It may well be with him she cometh, for whose sake both joy and pain
 Unto death I would gladly suffer, if she be for my service fain.
 And what better fate can befall me than that this my fair lot shall be,
 That she looketh upon my service, and her eyes shall my victory see!'
 And near to the king sat Bené, nor her heart for the strife did fail,
 For full oft had she seen his valour, and she deemed he might well prevail.
 But yet had she known that Gawain was brother unto the maid,
 And 'twas *he* who now stood in peril, of a sooth had she been dismayed.
 A golden ring from Itonjé she brought him for token fair,
 'Twas the same as her gallant brother did over the Sabbins bear
 O'er the Poinzacleins came Bené in a boat, and this word she spake,
 'From Château Merveil doth my lady, with the others, her journey take.'
 And she spake from the lips of Itonjé such steadfast words and true,
 That more, from the lips of a maiden, I ween never monarch knew.
 And she prayed him to think of her sorrow, since all gain did she hold as naught
 For the gain of his love, and his service was all that her true heart sought.
 And glad was the king at the tidings, yet would fight with her brother still—
 'Twere better I had no sister, such rewarding would please me ill!
 Then they bare unto him his harness, 'twas costly beyond compare—
 No hero, by love constrained, who fought for love's guerdon fair,
 Were he Gamuret, or Galoes, or Killicrates, the valiant king,
 Had better decked his body the love of a maid to win—
 And no richer silk had been woven in Ipopotiticon,
 Or brought from Kalomedenté, or the city of Akraton,
 Or from far-off Agatyrsjenté, than the silk for his garment wove—
 Then he kissed the small ring golden, the pledge of Itonjé's love,
 For he knew her for true and faithful, and tho' peril upon him pressed,
 Yet the thought of her love and her longing would guard, as a shield, his breast.
 All armed was now the monarch; twelve maidens on palfreys fair,
 Each one a spear-shaft holding, the awning aloft would bear.
 And the king, he rode beneath it, and its shadow was o'er his head,
 As on to the strife he craved for the gallant hero sped.

And on either side of the monarch there rode fair maidens twain,
 Tall and stately were they to look on, the noblest of all his train.
 The messengers of King Arthur no longer they made delay,
 And, behold! they met with Gawain as they rode on their homeward way,
 And ne'er had they felt such sorrow, their voices they raised on high,
 And they cried aloud for his peril, and their love and their loyalty.
 For the strife had near found its ending, and victor was Gawain's foe,
 For his strength, it was more than Gawain's, and well-nigh had he laid him low,
 When the pages who rode towards them called loudly on Gawain's name,
 For well did they know the hero, and it grieved them to see his shame.
 Then he, who erewhile would fight him, of conflict would have no more,
 But he cast from his hand his weapon, and he cried, as he wept full sore,
 'Accursèd am I, and dishonoured, and all blessing from me hath flown,
 Since my luckless hand, unwitting, so sinful a strife hath known.
 Methinks it is too unseemly! yea, guilty am I alway,
 And born 'neath a star of Ill Fortune, and forced from all bliss to stray.
 And the arms that to-day I carry are the same that of old I bore,
 For they are of Ill-luck the token, e'en to-day as they were of yore.
 Alas! that with gallant Gawain I have foughten so fierce a fight,
 'Tis *myself* whom I here have vanquished, and my joy shall have taken flight.
 With the first blow I struck against him misfortune hath reached my side,
 And peace shall have sped far from me, and her face from my face doth hide!'
 And Gawain heard, and saw his sorrow, and he spake out right wonderingly,
 'Alas, Sir Knight, who art thou, who speakest thus well of me?
 If I might such words have hearkened the while I had strength and power,
 Then my honour had ne'er been forfeit, for the victory is thine this hour!
 And fain would I know how men call him with whom I shall find my fame,
 Since hereafter I needs must seek it, so tell me, I pray, thy name—
 For ever was I the victor when I fought with one man alone.'
 'Yea, gladly my *name* I'll tell thee who aforetime my *face* hast known,
 And true service I fain would do thee wherever such chance befall,
 For thy kinsman am I, and cousin, and men call me *Parzival*!'
 Then out quoth Gawain, 'So, 'tis fitting, here Folly her goal hath found,
 And her ways full straight hath she wroughten which aforetime but crooked wound.
 Here have two hearts, leal and faithful, their hate 'gainst each other shown,
 And thy hand which hath won the victory hath the twain of us overthrown.
 And for *both* of us shalt thou sorrow, for thyself by thyself laid low,
 And the thought it shall surely grieve thee if thy true heart true faith doth know!'
 Then, e'en as the words were spoken, no longer the knight Gawain
 Might stand for very weakness, for the blows they had dulled his brain,
 And his footsteps they failed and faltered, and prone on the grass he lay—
 Then down sprang the squire of King Arthur, and aid did he bring straightway,
 For he lifted his head, and from off it he loosened the helmet's band,
 With his head-gear of peacock's feathers the face of Gawain he fanned
 Till his care new strength had brought him—Now on to the field did ride,
 From the armies twain, much people, they flocked hither from either side.
 And each one would seek his station, for here should the fight be fought,
 And the lists, they were set with tree-trunks, each smooth as a mirror wrought.
 Gramoflanz the cost had given, since from him had the challenge come,
 A hundred in all the tree-trunks, and brightly they shone each one.
 And no man should come within them, and the place between was wide,
 Full forty lengths from each other stood the fifty on either side,
 Each blazoned with many colours; and here should the combat be;
 And on either side the army from the strife should hold them free.
 As by moat and rampart sundered, so should they in peace remain,

In this wise they sware, the foemen, King Gramoflanz and Gawain.
 To this combat, by none awaited, came the folk from either side,
 At the self-same hour, fain were they to know what should there betide,
 For they marvelled much who had fought here, and had shown such knightly skill;
 Or who should such strife have challenged, for alone was it foughten still,
 And neither side their comrades had bidden unto the ring,
 But alone had each knight come hither, and men deemed it a wondrous thing.
 But now as the fight was foughten on the flower-besprinkled plain,
 Came King Gramoflanz, to wreak vengeance for the garland upon Gawain;
 And he heard what thing had chanced there, that so fierce the fight had been
 That never a fiercer conflict with sword might a man have seen,
 And the twain who fought together had never a cause to fight—
 Then the king, from out his army, rode straight to the gallant knights;
 And he found them battle-weary, and much he mourned their pain;
 Tho' scarcely his strength might bear him, up-sprang the knight Gawain,
 And the twain they stood together—Now Bené rode with the king,
 And with him, as the strife was ended, she came to the battle-ring,
 And she saw Gawain all powerless, whom, for honour and fair renown,
 O'er all the world had she chosen to crown with joy's fairest crown.
 With a cry of heartfelt sorrow from her palfrey the maiden sprung,
 And she spake, as her arms around him in a close embrace she flung,
 'Accurst be the hand that such sorrow on so fair a form hath brought,
 For in sooth all manly beauty its mirror in thee hath sought!'
 On the sward did she bid him seat him, and, the while that she wept full sore,
 With tender hand from his eyelids she wiped the sweat and gore;
 And heavy and hot his harness—Then Gramoflanz quoth again,
 'In sooth must I grieve for thy sorrow, since my hand wrought it not, Gawain;
 If to-morrow again thou comest, and wilt meet me upon this field,
 Then gladly will I await thee, and will face thee with spear and shield.
 Now as lief would I fight with a woman as with thee, who art brought so low,
 For how shall I win me honour if strength shall have failed my foe?
 Go, rest thee to-day, for 'tis needful, and then wouldst thou take the place
 Of thy father, King Lot, I am ready to meet thee here, face to face.'
 But Parzival stood unwearied, nor as yet a sign he bare
 Of pallor, nor strength had failed him, and he faced the monarch fair,
 And he loosed from his head the helmet, that the king his face might see,
 And he spake, 'Sir, if this my cousin in aught shall have wrongèd thee
 Then take *me* as his pledge, unwearied, as thou seest, is yet mine hand,
 And the wrath thou dost bear against him I may well with my sword withstand.'
 Then spake the King of Rosche Sabbins, 'Sir Knight, at the morrow's morn
 For my garland he payeth tribute, and its fame shall anew be born,
 Or to such a pass shall he bring me that shame shall my portion be—
 Thou mayst otherwise be a hero, but this conflict is not for *thee*!'
 In wrath spake the lips of Bené, 'Fie on thee! thou faithless hound,
 Thro' him whom thy false heart hateth thine heart hath its freedom found.
 She to whom thou wouldst do love-service, she liveth at his command,
 Thyself hast renounced the victory which else might have crowned thine hand.
 Thou hast no claim on Love's rewarding, and if ever within thine heart
 Love had for awhile her dwelling with falsehood she bare a part!'
 As thus she waxed full wrathful, Gramoflanz led the maid aside,
 And quoth, 'Now, Lady, grieve not, this strife must needs betide.
 But stay thou here with thy master, and say to his sister sweet
 That I am in truth her servant, in all that a knight finds meet.'
 But now as Bené hearkened, and knew of a truth Gawain
 Was brother unto her lady, and must fight on the grassy plain,

Then drave griefs plough its furrows thro' her heart, both deep and sore,
 And filled them with flood of sorrow, for truth in her heart she bore.
 And she quoth, 'Ride hence, accursèd, thou false and faithless one,
 For steadfast love and loyal thine heart hath never won!'
 The king and his knights they rode hence, and the lads of Arthur's train
 They took the heroes' chargers, weary with strife the twain.
 Then Parzival, and Gawain, and Bené, that maiden bright,
 They rode to the camp of King Arthur with many a gallant knight.
 And Parzival in manhood had so borne the prize away
 That all men were glad at his coming, and rejoiced in his fame that day.
 And more, if I can, would I tell ye—the wise men of either host
 Spake but of this man, of his valour in this wise they made their boast,
 'Wot ye well who hath here been victor? 'Twas Parzival, he alone!'
 And so fair was his face to look on none fairer was ever known.
 So thought they who looked upon him, and they swear it, both man and maid—
 So he came to the tent of Gawain; and little his host delayed,
 But he bade them bring costly raiment, and rich as was his own gear,
 And alike were they clad, the heroes, and all folk must the marvel hear
 That Parzival came among them, of whose glory all men had heard,
 And the fame of his deeds so knightly, and no mouth but spake this word.
 Quoth Gawain, 'Art thou fain to look on four queens who are kin to thee,
 And other fair ladies with them, then thy guide will I gladly be.'
 Quoth Gamuret's son, 'If fair ladies be here thou shalt vex them not
 With the sight of my face, for no kindness from woman shall be my lot
 Since by Plimizöl's bank they hearkened to the shame that upon me fell:
 May their honour of God be guarded, for ever I wish them well,
 But my shame weigheth heavy on me, and it vexeth so sore my heart,
 I were fain ne'er to look on woman, but live me a life apart'
 'Yet so must it be,' quoth Gawain; then Parzival he led
 To the four queens, who gave him greeting and kissed him with lips so red.
 But sorely it vexed the Duchess, that she, too, must kiss this knight,
 Who little had cared for her kisses, nor would for her favours fight—
 Tho' her lands and her love she proffered when he before Logrois fought,
 And she rode far to overtake him—thus shame in her anger wrought.
 But the others they spake him gently, with never a thought of wrong,
 Till shame from his heart was driven, and joy in its stead waxed strong.
 Then Gawain of right and reason, if Bené his grace would hold,
 Bade her seal her lips to silence, to her lady no word be told,
 'That King Gramoflanz for his garland doth hatred toward me bear,
 And at the set time to-morrow our strife must be foughten fair,
 Speak no word of this to my sister, and do thou thy tears give o'er,'
 And she spake, 'I do well to weep thus, and to mourn, and to sorrow sore,
 For whoever shall fall in the combat my lady must sorrow know,
 And however the battle goeth, the issue shall be for woe.
 And well may we mourn the venture, my lady and I alike,
 What boots it to be her brother, if thou at her heart wilt strike?'
 Now the host to their tents betook them, and the mid-day meal was spread
 For Gawain, and the knights and ladies who should break at his table bread,
 And Parzival as companion should have the Duchess fair—
 And Gawain, he besought his lady for the hero to have good care;
 But she quoth, 'To my care dost thou give him, who can make of a woman sport?
 How should I care for this man? Yet would I gainsay thee naught;
 And if this be thy will, I will do it, tho' for payment I mocking know'—
 Quoth Gamuret's son, 'Nay, Lady, thou doest me wrong I trow,

At least have I so much wisdom, if I know myself aright,
That women are free from my mocking, since ill 'twould beseem a knight!
Whatever they set before them no lack had they there of meat,
And courteous was their service, and with joy all the folk did eat.
But Itonjé, she looked on Bené, and she read in her eyes the tale
Of the tears she had wept but lately, and for sorrow her cheeks grew pale,
And nothing she ate, for she thought still, 'Now wherefore doth Bené weep?
For I sent her but now to the monarch who my heart doth his captive keep,
And for whose sake I grieve me sorely—Have I done aught to vex my knight?
Doth he think to renounce my service and no more for my love to fight?
If, with steadfast heart and manly, he thinketh on me no more,
Poor maid, I must die of sorrow, and the love that to him I bore!'
The noontide hour was over ere the feast had ended here,
Then hither rode King Arthur, and his queen, fair Guinevere,
With a host of knights and ladies, to where, within their sight,
Mid the band of gracious maidens sat that true and valiant knight;
And to Parzival such greeting and such welcome fair they gave
That from many sweet lips sweet kisses he won, that hero brave!
And Arthur would do him honour, and with many a gracious word
He thanked him for the valour that had spread his name abroad,
And the fame that had waxed so goodly, and that stood so high and fair,
That of right o'er all men living the crown of worth he bare.
Quoth the Waleis unto King Arthur, 'Yet Sire, when I saw thee last
My honour so sore was wounded that it well-nigh to earth was cast;
And in knighthood I paid such forfeit that of knighthood was I forlorn—
But now have I hearkened to thee, and if thou be not forsworn
Then honour still dwelleth with me, tho' my heart it misgives me sore!
I would trust in thy word right gladly—But what of these knights who swore
True friendship and brotherhood with me, and from whom I must part in shame?'
Then all with one voice they spake there—He had won for himself such fame
And had wrought such brave deeds of knighthood in many a distant land,
That his fame o'er the fame of all others did high and unspotted stand.
Then the knights of the Duchess' army they came where by Arthur's side
Sat Parzival, fair to look on, 'mid the knightly circle wide.
And the king in the tent received them, but so courtly was he and wise,
That, tho' wide was the tent of Gawain, he thought best that in all men's eyes
He should sit without on the meadow, and the knights they should sit around,
And strangers they were to each other who place in the circle found.
Would ye know who was this and that one? The tale it were all too long
If Christian I named and paynim—Who were Klingsor's warriors strong;
Who were they who so well were armèd, and showed them such men of might
When they rode from the city of Logrois, and would for their Duchess fight;
Who had followed King Arthur hither—If each one, his land and kin,
I named in their rightful order 'twere ill to the end to win!
But all men they spake together, there was none there like Parzival,
For his face and his form so lovely many women might love him well;
And nothing there failed unto him of aught that beseemed a knight
Who beareth the crown of honour, and fighteth a goodly fight.
Then Gamuret's son upstood there, and he spake, 'Ye who shall be here
Give counsel, and help me win that which my soul ever holdeth dear;
A strange and a hidden wonder it drave me from out your band—
Ye who brotherhood once have sworn me, and in friendship have clasped my hand,
Now help me, by this your knighthood, mine honour to win again!'
And gladly would Arthur grant him that for which his desire was fain.
Then aside with few folk he stepped him, and straitly he prayed this grace,

That the strife, at the hour appointed, he in Gawain's stead might face,
'Right gladly will I defy him, King Gramoflanz, in his pride;
I brake from his tree this morning a bough ere I thence did ride,
And for that he of need must fight me—For conflict I sought his land,
And for nothing else came I hither but to fight with his strong right hand.
I thought not I here should find thee, my cousin, it grieves me sore,
For this king did I surely take thee, who never from strife forbore.
Now let me, I prithee, fight him; if ever he know defeat
My hand shall such lesson teach him as he findeth not over sweet!
They have given me back mine honour, and thy brother knight am I,
And thy kinsman true, fair cousin, so grant to me, cousinly,
That this combat be mine—I swear thee for us twain will I face the foe,
And there do such deeds of valour that all men shall my manhood know!'
Quoth Gawain, 'In the court of King Arthur have I many a brother dear,
And kinsman true, yet to no man may I grant what thou prayest here.
My cause is so good, I think me, that Fate so shall rule the fight
That I stand at the last the victor, tho' my foe be a man of might.
God reward thee that thou, of thy kindness, this conflict for me wouldst face,
But the day is not yet in its dawning when another may take my place!'
Now Arthur the prayer had hearkened, of their speech he an end would make,
Once more in the ring beside them his seat did the monarch take.
And the cup-bearers did not tarry, the noble youths they bare
Many golden cups so precious, and wroughten with jewels fair,
Nor one alone could fill them—and when their task was o'er
The folk uprose, and gat them each one to his rest once more.
And night-fall had come upon them—Naught did Parzival delay,
But he wrought in such wise that his harness might be ready ere break of day.
Were a strap or a fastening broken, of that did he have good care,
And he bade them look well unto it, that all should be fit and fair.
And a shield new and strong must they bring him, for his own, in many a fight,
With many a blow was cloven, and they brought him a shield of might;
And the serving-men who bare it, they knew not the knight, I trow,
And Frenchmen were some among them, as the venture doth bid ye know.
And the steed that erewhile to jousting the Knight of the Grail must bear,
Of that did a squire bethink him, and ne'er might it better fare.
But now 'twas the hour for slumber, and the night had o'ercome the day,
And Parzival slept, and before him all ready his armour lay.
And King Gramoflanz, he rued it that the day such chance had brought
That another man in his presence for the sake of his garland fought;
Nor his folk might still his longing for the strife that the morn should bring,
And the thought, that he had delayed him, full sorely it vexed the king.
What, then, should the hero do here? Since honour he sought and fame,
He scarce might await the dawning, and the strife that with daylight came,
But ere sunrise himself and his charger were clad all in harness rare—
Did women, with wealth o'erburdened, the cost of his decking share?
I wot that, without their aiding, it costly and fair should be,
For the sake of a maid did he deck him, in her service no laggard he!
So he rode hence to seek his foeman, and sorely it vexed the king
That the early light of the morning Sir Gawain had failed to bring.
Now, unknown unto all, in secret stole Parzival from the court,
And he stripped of its floating pennon a strong spear from Angram brought;
And fully armed was the hero, and lonely he took his way
Where the posts round the ring of battle shone fair in the dawning day.
And he saw the king await him, and ere ever a word they spake
Men say that they smote each other thro' the shield, and the spear-shafts brake;

And from either hand the splinters flew high in the summer air,
For skilled were they both in jousting, and their swords they right well might bear.
And the dew was brushed from the meadow, and the helmets felt many a blow
From the edge of the blades keen-tempered, no faltering might either know.
And the grass underfoot was trodden, and the dew-drops in many a place
Swept away, and I needs must mourn here the red blossoms' vanished grace.
Yet more do I mourn for the heroes, and their toil without thought of fear,
And who with unmixed rejoicing, the tale of their strife should hear
To whom they had ne'er done evil?—Then Gawain must himself prepare
For the toil and the stress of battle, and the peril he thought to dare.
And 'twas even the midst of the morning ere of all men the tale was told
From his tent was Parzival missing, and they sought for the hero bold.
Did he think to make peace? Nay, his bearing spake little, methinks, of peace,
For he fought as a man, and 'twas noontide ere ever the strife might cease.
A bishop sang Mass for Gawain, and the folk they stood thick around,
And many a knight and lady on horseback might there be found,
Without the tent of King Arthur, ere the Mass to an end they sing—
While the priest did his holy office, beside him there stood the king;
When he spake the Benediction, then Gawain armed himself for fight,
And greaves of iron, well wroughten, they did on his limbs of might.
Then uprose a voice of wailing from the women, and one and all
The host rode forth to the meadow; and lo! there did strife befall,
And they heard the clash of the sword-blades, and they saw the fire-sparks fly
From the helmets as there the foemen their blows with fierce strength did ply.
King Gramoflanz oft had boasted he would scorn with *one* man to fight,
He thought here that *six* were his foemen, and each one a valiant knight
Yet none but Parzival faced him, and he fought in such gallant wise,
That he taught to the king a lesson which men e'en to-day may prize;
That in his own praise his own lips should speak never more this tale,
He could fight and could conquer *two* men, since o'er *one* he might not prevail.
From left and from right came the armies, o'er the grassy plain so wide,
And, each one their station keeping, they halted on either side,
And they looked on the mighty combat, on one side the chargers stood,
And afoot on the ground they battled with sword-blades, the heroes good.
And sharp and sore was the conflict, and steadfast the twain did stand,
And their swords on high they tossed them, and oft did the blades change hands.
Now Gramoflanz reaped sore payment for the garland from off his tree,
To the kinsman of his fair lady should the strife none too easy be.
His kinship with fair Itonjé had stood Parzival in good stead,
If right might have claimed a hearing, yet was not his strife ill-spèd.
And they who much fame had won them, again for fair fame would fight;
And one strove for the sake of his kinsman, and one for his lady bright,
For he did but Frau Minne's bidding, as was meet for her vassal true—
Now uprode the gallant Gawain, and e'en as he nearer drew
The conflict was nigh its ending, and the Waleis should victor be;
And, bareheaded, unto the battle, there hastened those heroes three,
Brandelidelein of Punturtois, and Count Bernard of Riviers,
And the third knight who rode beside them was Affinamus of Clitiers.
From the army over against them came King Arthur beside Gawain,
To the two knights, with battle wearied, they rode o'er the grassy plain;
And all the five they thought them 'twas time that the strife should end,
And Gramoflanz must confess here that no longer he might contend,
And his own mouth proclaimed him vanquished, and his foeman had won the day—
And the folk who had seen the combat might never his word gainsay!
Then out spake King Lot's son gaily, 'Sir King, I will speak to thee

To-day, as yestreen thou spakest when rest thou didst bid to *me*
"Go rest thee to-day, for 'tis needful," he who conflict did here demand,
 He will own thou art all too feeble this day to resist mine hand.
Alone I might well have faced thee, but thou with but *two* wilt fight!
 To-morrow I'll dare the venture, and may God show forth the right!'

Then the king he rode to his army, but first must he pledge his word
 He would meet Gawain on the morrow, and face him with spear and sword.
 To Parzival quoth King Arthur, 'Nephew, thou late didst pray,
 Of thy manhood, to fight this combat for Gawain, and he said thee Nay,
 And therein didst thou sore lament thee, and yet thou this fight hast fought
 For him who did strait forbid thee! Of our will hast thou asked us naught.
 From our court, as a thief, hast thou stolen, or else had we held thine hand
 Afar from this strife, I wot well thou didst fight not at *our* command!
 Yet Gawain, he shall not be wrathful, tho' great praise be for this thy meed.'—
 Quoth Gawain, 'Nay, it nothing grieves me, my cousin's gallant deed,
 To-morrow is all too early if this combat I needs must face,
 An the king would withdraw his challenge I would count it to him for grace.'
 To the camp rode the mighty army, there were many ladies fair,
 And many a knight in armour, and costly the arms they bare.
 And I ween that never an army was so richly decked before,
 For the knights of the good Round Table, and the men of the Duchess wore
 Fair surcoats richly blazoned, of silk from Zinidunt,
 And bright was their outer garments, and brought from far Pelpiunt.
 But the heroes in either army spake ever of Parzival,
 And their lips, in such wise they praised him, that his friends it rejoiced them well.
 And the men of Gramoflanz spake thus, that never the sun had shone
 On a knight who fought so bravely, or such gallant deeds had done;
 And whatever feats of knighthood had been wrought on either side,
 Yet he, o'er all other heroes, the victor should still abide.
 Yet they knew not of whom they spake thus, nay, neither his race or name,
 Tho' the army it rang with his praises, and no mouth but declared his fame.
 Then Gramoflanz did they counsel, King Arthur he well might pray
 To take good heed to his army that no knight from his ranks should stray
 For combat, as e'en that morning, but to send unto him *one* knight,
 The son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, for with *him* had he come to fight.
 And straightway he sent the message by two courtly lads and wise,
 And he spake, 'Now look well for the maiden who is fairest in all men's eyes,
 Look well by whom Bené sitteth; and so ye play well your part,
 Ye shall see in what wise she bear her, if joyful, or sad at heart.
 Ye shall prove these her ways in secret, in her eyes ye right well may see
 If yet for a friend she mourneth; and this too your task shall be,
 Ye shall give to my friend, fair Bené, this letter and golden ring,
 She knoweth for whom is the token—Now see that ye do this thing!'

In the other camp, the meanwhile, did Itonjé the tidings hear
 That her gallant brother, Gawain, and he whom her soul held dear,
 The fairest knight that a maiden within her heart might hold,
 Would fight, the one with the other, and their hand might no man withhold.
 Then her maiden shame it yielded to the flood of her grief so sore,
 And none shall rejoice at her sorrow, for the pain undeserved she bore.
 Then her mother and Queen Arnivé they led the maid aside
 To a tent so small and silken, and Arnivé her grief would chide,
 And she bade her cease her weeping—There was naught that the maid might say,
 But to speak aloud the secret she hid in her heart away;
 Then out quoth the royal maiden, 'Of my brother shall he be slain
 Who is lord of my heart and my true love! Let his hand from such deed refrain!'

To a noble youth spake Arnivé, 'Now get thee unto my son,
 And bid him come hither quickly, with him would I speak alone.'
 Then the lad he brought King Arthur—Now this was Arnivé's mind,
 If she told unto him the story perchance he might counsel find,
 And by him should that strife be hindered, for which the maiden fair
 So sorely wept, and such sorrow and anguish of heart must bear.
 Now they came to the camp of King Arthur, who Gramoflanz' message bore,
 By the silken tent they dismounted; there sat Bené before the door,
 And within spake the maid to King Arthur, 'If my brother shall slay my king
 To pleasure his faithless Duchess, doth he deem that shall honour bring?
 He might know of himself it were ill-done—He hath wronged him no whit I ween,
 That he doeth to *me* true service, his safety might well have been!
 If my brother be yet in his senses he doth of our true love know,
 How pure it is, and how faithful, and this venture should work him woe.
 A bitter death shall it bring me, the hand that my love doth kill—
 Sir King, thou shalt mourn my sorrow, and I think not that such thy will,'
 Spake the fair maid unto King Arthur, 'Forget not that thou shalt be
 Mine uncle, and stay this combat which worketh such ill to me!'
 Quoth Arthur aloud in his wisdom, 'Alas, thou fair niece of mine,
 That thus young thou canst love so dearly, for sorrow shall sure be thine,
 As sorrow befell thy sister, Surdamur, for her love so true
 To the Emperor of Greece—Sweet maiden, thy will might I surely do,
 And hinder this strife, if I knew well that ye twain were but one in heart—
 Yet King Irot's son, he is valiant, and courage in him hath part,
 And this combat he'll fight, full surely, an Love stay not his hand so bold—
 Did he ne'er, in a joyful moment, thy fair face and sweet lips behold?'
 And she spake, 'Nay, we love, but neither as yet hath the other seen,
 Tho' of true love many a token from his hand hath my portion been.
 And tokens true have I sent him, that no doubt should betwixt us lie—
 No falsehood my king's heart ruleth, but he loveth me steadfastly!'
 Then the maiden Bené saw them, and knew them, the squires twain
 Who came to the court of King Arthur from Gramoflanz' kingly train,
 And she spake, 'Here should no man linger, will ye that I bid them go,
 The folk, from our tent? It were ill-done, methinks, that all men should know
 How sorely my lady sorroweth for the sake of her love so dear;
 Methinks it might lightly happen that too many the tale should hear!'
 Then forth from the tent went Bené, and in secret unto her care
 The squire gave the folded letter, and the golden ring he bare,
 And they, too, had heard the wailing of the maid, and they knew full well
 Why she sorrowed, and this their errand they fain to the king would tell.
 And they asked of the maiden Bené if she their friend would be?
 And she spake, 'Stand without the circle till I bid ye to come to me!'
 Then Bené, the gentle maiden, she told them within the tent
 That without two squires were waiting, from Gramoflanz hither sent,
 And fain would they speak with King Arthur—'But unfitting it seemeth me
 That we call them unto our counsels, and that witnesses they should be.
 On my lady must I avenge me, if thus they shall see her weep,
 I bade them await my bidding, and without there their station keep!'
 Quoth Arthur, 'Are they the pages whom I saw behind me ride?
 Of noble birth shall the twain be, methinks, it might well betide
 That so wise are they both and courteous they might give us counsel good,
 Methinks of their king's love either would treat in a fitting mood?'
 Quoth Bené, 'Nay, that I know not, but Sire, of thy grace, this ring
 And the letter which now I bring thee, they bare hither from their king.

As but now I left the pavilion, of the pages, one gave it me.
 Now see, Lady, do thou take it, for methinks it is meant for thee!
 Then Itonjé, she kissed the letter, and she held it unto her heart,
 And she quoth, 'Now, Sire, thou canst see here if he would in my love have part.'
 In his hand Arthur took the letter, and within he found written fair
 The words of one who loveth, and his passion would fain declare.
 For Gramoflanz' hand had written the words that his lips would say,
 And Arthur, he saw by the letter that Love held o'er his heart such sway
 That ne'er had he known aforetime one who loved with so true a love—
 And the words that within were written Frau Minne might well approve.
 'Now greeting to whom I owe greeting, whose greeting I fain would earn,
 To thee, O thou gracious maiden, whose heart toward my heart doth turn!
 Who with comfort would fain console me—Our love goeth hand-in-hand,
 And the solace thy love would bring me doth high o'er all solace stand;
 And my joy in thy love is rooted, and my faith is to thee held fast,
 And sorrow and bitter anguish shall forth from my heart be cast.
 And thou bringest me help and counsel, so that never an evil thought
 Or a faithless deed, and shameful, shall against my fame be brought.
 But I look on thy truth and thy beauty with ever a steadfast mind,
 As the Pole-star doth in the north pole the goal of its gazing find,
 And neither its post forsaketh; e'en so shall our true love be,
 And waver not, one from the other—So think thou, sweet maid, on me,
 How I mourned unto thee my sorrow, nor be weary of this my prayer—
 And if one would part thee from me, for the hatred that he shall bear
 Unto me, then shalt thou bethink thee how thy love shall reward us both,
 And think thou of woman's honour, nor be of thy favours loth;
 But still let me be thy servant, in thy service I fain would live,
 And, in all that I may, true service I will to my lady give.'
 Quoth Arthur, 'Fair niece, thou saidst truly, he greeteth thee without guile
 Such tale doth this letter tell me that never, at any while,
 Have I found of true love such marvel! His grief shalt thou put away,
 As he too shall cure thy sorrow, so do thou thy weeping stay,
 And trust unto me, this combat shall be hindered—Yet say thou here,
 Thou wert captive, how hath it chanced then that ye hold each other dear?
 Thou shalt give him thy fair love's payment, that he do thee service true.'—
 Spake Itonjé, 'See, here she standeth who us twain together drew,
 Our love, it had else been hidden—If thou wilt that I now may see
 Him whom my heart desireth she will summon him unto me!'
 Quoth Arthur, 'Now, show her to me; if I may, I this thing will guide
 That your will shall be done, and hereafter ye twain shall in joy abide!'
 Quoth Itonjé, 'Twas none but Bené; and two of his squires are here,
 If thou wilt, do this thing, (for I think me my life shall to thee be dear.)
 Thou shalt see that the king cometh hither, that he looketh upon my face
 In whom all my joy is hidden, and my life shall be in his grace!'
 Then Arthur, the wise and courteous, would speak with the squires without,
 He greeted them as he saw them, and boldly the one spake out,
 'Sire, King Gramoflanz, he prays thee, for thine honour as knight and king,
 That the oath sworn 'twixt him and Gawain thou wilt to fulfilment bring.
 And further, Sire, he prays thee that none other with him shall fight,
 So great is thine host, must he face *all*, methinks it would scarce be right!
 But *Gawain* shalt thou send against him, for he willeth no other foe,
 And Gawain alone hath he challenged, as thyself thou shalt surely know!'
 Quoth King Arthur unto the pages, 'I will free us from blame alway,
 And sorely it grieved my nephew that he fought not the strife to-day.
 And the knight who fought with your monarch, to victory was he born,

The son of Gamuret is he—Three armies are here this morn,
 And from many a land came they hither, but never a man hath seen
 In combat so brave a hero, and glorious his deeds have been.
 He is Parzival, my kinsman, ye shall see him, the fair of face,—
 For the faith and the need of Gawain will I do to the king this grace.’
 Then King Arthur and maiden Bené, with the squires they rode here and there,
 And in sooth those squires they looked on full many a lady fair,
 And they saw on the jewelled helmets many proud crests and knightly wave,
 And few for such sight shall vex them, for he who is rich as brave
 Full many a friend he findeth! They ’lighted not from their steed,
 And the bravest men of the armies that lay camped on the flowery mead
 King Arthur would show unto them, they might gaze on them at their will,
 Knights, ladies, and gentle maidens, of beauty they saw their fill!
 In three portions it lay, the army, and two spaces there were between—
 Then away from the camp rode King Arthur, far out on the plain so green,
 And he quoth, ’Now sweet maiden Bené, her plaint didst thou hear alway,
 Itonjé, the child of my sister, her weeping she will not stay.
 These my comrades who ride beside me, if they will, they may well believe
 Of her beauty their king hath robbed her, so sorely the maid doth grieve!
 Now help me, ye twain, and thou, Bené, that the king he shall hither ride,
 E’en to-day, tho’ the strife to-morrow he may, if he will, abide.
 I will bring Gawain to meet him on the plain, as he prayed but now—
 If he cometh to-day to mine army ’gainst the morn is he armed I trow,
 For Love such a shield shall give him that his foeman may ill withstand
 The courage that Love doth kindle, and that nerveth anew the hand.
 And his princes shall he bring with him, for here would I do as best
 Doth lie in my power that the Duchess shall hearken to my behest,
 And peace shall be sealed between them—Now strive ye, my comrades dear,
 With skill for such happy ending, ’twill be to your honour here.
 And further I make my mourning, wherein shall have been my sin
 That I wrought ’gainst your king that he beareth, in such measure, against my kin,
 Both love alike and hatred? Methinks, he doth hold us light!
 Another king, mine equal, had thought more of this my right.
 Doth he think to repay with hatred *her* brother, who loves him well?
 If his heart such thought shall teach him, then he knoweth not true Love’s spell!’
 Quoth one of the squires to King Arthur, ’What my king did to thee of ill,
 That, Sire, shall he do no longer, for courteous shall he be still.
 But thou knowest well the old hatred, and ’twere better the king should stay
 Within his camp, I think me, than ride to thine host to-day.
 Of the same mind is still the Duchess, that she counteth him for her foe,
 And maketh her plaint against him, as many a man doth know!’
 ’With but few folk shall he come hither,’ quoth Arthur, ’the while I’ll pray
 Of that high and noble lady that her anger she put away.
 And an escort good I’ll send him, Beau-corps, my sister’s son,
 Shall meet him half-way, and his journey shall under my care be done.
 Nor as shame shall he look upon it, for brave men and true I’ll send’—
 Then leave did they take of King Arthur, and their way to the camp they wend.
 Alone did they leave the monarch, and Bené and the pages twain
 Rode swiftly unto Rosche Sabbins, on the further side of the plain.
 ’Twas the fairest day of his life-time, so thought the joyful king,
 When his squires and the maiden Bené such tidings to him might bring.
 And e’en as he hearkened to them his heart spake, in sooth to-day
 Good Fortune had thought upon him, and his sorrow was put away!
 Then he spake, ’He would come, right gladly,’ and he chose to him comrades three,
 A prince of his land was each one who bare the king company.

Brandelidelein, his uncle, with his nephew was fain to ride,
 Affinamus of Clitiers, and Count Bernard of Riviers rode beside.
 And each man he chose another who should be for such journey meet,
 And twelve in all might ye reckon who rode hence the king to greet.
 And many a squire went with them, and many a footman strong,
 Well armèd, as should befit them, did unto the train belong.
 Would ye know how the knights had robed them? Of silk was their raiment bright,
 And heavy with gold inwoven that shone in the morning light.
 And the king, he went as to hawking, with his falconer by his side—
 Now Arthur had well bethought him, and Beau-corps he bade to ride,
 And half-way to meet the monarch as escort both fit and fair—
 And over the stretch of the meadow, or a pool or a brook lay there,
 Where'er one might find the water rode the king as on pastime bent,
 Yet ever Love drew him onward, and on Love was his heart intent.
 And Beau-corps, he rode towards him, and in such wise the king would greet
 That I ween 'twas a joyful moment when the twain and their folk did meet.
 And more than fifty pages with Beau-corps should ride that day,
 And their faces were fair to look on, Dukes and Counts might they be alway,
 And kings' sons, too, rode among them—And the greeting was good to see,
 When from either side the children kissed each other, of true heart free.
 And Beau-corps was fair to look on, and the king asked, who might he be?
 And Bené, she straightway answered. 'The son of King Lot is he,
 And *Beau-corps* the name men call him'—Then he thought, 'Of a sooth, my heart,
 Thou hast found her! For she shall be like him who so knightly doth play his part,
 For in truth shall she be his sister, she who sent me the headgear rare
 That of erst was in Sinzester fashioned, and the hawk on mine hand I bear.
 If she further will show me kindness then all earthly power and pride
 Would I count as naught, might I win her, tho' the earth were twice as wide.
 And surely she meaneth truly—For love of her came I here,
 Hitherto hath she dealt so kindly that methinks I but little fear;
 She will show unto me such favour that my courage shall wax full high!'
 Then he clasped the hand of her brother that fair in his hand did lie.
 In the meanwhile within his army King Arthur in such wise wrought
 That the Duchess was fain to grant him the peace that his lips had sought.
 For rich was her consolation for her love by King Gramoflanz slain,
 For whose sake she had borne him hatred; and no more might her lips complain,
 For her anger had sunk to slumber, and she wakened to life anew
 'Neath Gawain's embrace so tender, and her wrath, it was smitten thro'.
 Then Arthur, the king of the Bretons, took many a lady bright,
 One hundred, both wife and maiden, who were lovely in all men's sight,
 In a tent apart he set them—Nor might her lot fairer be,
 Itonjé, who sat beside them, since her king there she thought to see.
 And ever her heart was joyful, and yet in her soft eyes' glow
 Ye might see that the gentle maiden thro' love must sore sorrow know.
 And many a knight and hero sat there, yet among them all
 No face was so fair to look on as the fair face of Parzival.
 To the tent-door up rode the monarch, and Gramoflanz, he ware
 For garment a robe of wonder, in Gampfassâsch wroughten fair.
 'Twas a rick silk, all gold embroidered, and woven with golden thread,
 And a shimmer of light from his vesture afar round the monarch spread.
 Then they who had hither ridden adown from their steeds they spring,
 And the squires, they press them forward to the tent before their king,
 And the chamberlains vie with each other, and they make thro' the court a way
 To the throne where the queen of the Bretons in her glory sat that day.
 Brandelidelein, his uncle, before the monarch went,

And the twain, Guinevere she kissed them, and bade welcome within her tent.
And Count Bernard, and Affinamus a kiss from her lips must take—
Then to Gramoflanz Arthur turned him, and thus to the king he spake,
'Ere thou takest thy seat, bethink thee; if thou dost a maiden love,
And thou seest her here, thou mayst kiss her, nor will I such kiss reprove!'
It had told him which was his lady, the letter he read but now
In the open field, and that letter, 'twas her brother's face I trow!
The brother of her who from all men had hidden her love so true—
And Gramoflanz' eyes beheld her, and straightway his love he knew,
And his heart swelled high within him—Since Arthur had willed their bliss,
And had bid him in men's sight greet her, on her sweet lips the maid he kissed.
Brandelidelein, he sat him by the queen, fair Guinevere,
And King Gramoflanz, he was seated by the maid, who with many a tear
Had dimmed the glow of her beauty; 'twas for his sake she wept so sore,
Nor might he take vengeance on her, since guiltless this woe she bore.
But softly he spake unto her, and he vowed to her service true,
And she thanked him for this his coming, and their hearts toward each other flew,
And further no word they spake there, but they gazed in each other's eyes,
And their yea and their nay would I tell here, were I but in Love's language wise.
To Brandelidelein quoth Arthur, 'Methinks thou enow hast told
Thy tale in the ears of my lady!' Then he led forth the hero bold,
To a little tent he led him, apart on the grassy field;
Yet Gramoflanz came not with them, but, e'en as King Arthur willed,
He abode in the tent with his comrades, and so fair were the ladies bright,
That I deem well to look upon them but little would vex a knight
And fair was their joy and their pastime, 'twould please many a man, I trow,
Who to-day, after peril ended, would joy for his sorrow know.
Then wine to the queen and her ladies and to many a knight they bare,
And, methinks, an enow they tasted, their faces waxed fresh and fair.
To Brandelidelein and King Arthur the cup-bearers wine must bring;
As they passed from the tent in this wise quoth Arthur, the goodly king:
'Sir King, say, the conflict ended, if the strife in such wise have run
That the king, the son of thy sister, shall have slain my sister's son,
Yet would woo my niece, the maiden who maketh to him her moan
But now, as they sit together and their love for each other own;
If she do as shall best beseem her, she will favour him never more,
But will give him for payment hatred as shall vex the king full sore
If her love he yet desireth—for where love is o'ercome by hate
Then joy from true hearts is banished, and desire doth with sorrow mate!'
Then out spake the King of Punturtois to Arthur of Britanny,
'Sir King, they are sons to our sisters betwixt whom this hate shall be.
'Tis our part this strife to hinder, nor other shall be its end
Save that they twain shall love each other, and from foe shall be turned to friend.
'Twere best that thy niece, Itonjé, ere she yield to my nephew's prayer,
Shall say, if in truth he love her he shall from this strife forbear.
Thus an end shall be put to the combat, and the quarrel shall turn to peace—
And thou, thou shalt pray the Duchess that her wrath 'gainst my nephew cease!'
'Yea, that have I done,' quoth Arthur, 'my sister's son, Gawain,
He holdeth such power o'er the lady, that, as courtesy doth constrain,
For his sake and mine she forgiveth the ill that the king hath done—
Now do thou thy part with thy nephew, that peace on his side be won.'
Brandelidelein quoth straightway, 'I will do e'en as thou dost say'—
And back to the tent and the feasting the monarchs they took their way.
Then sat the King of Punturtois on one side of the gracious queen,
And Parzival sat on the other, and so fair was his face, I ween,

That never a man so goodly their eyes had beheld afore—
 Then Arthur, the king, he rose up, and he gat him from out the door,
 And he sought Gawain, his nephew; then he, who a while must hear
 How his foemen had ridden hither, learnt that Arthur now drew anear,
 And before his tent dismounted—Then swift did Sir Gawain spring,
 And forth from the tent on the meadow he hastened to meet the king.
 Then counsel they took together, and the Duchess, she peace would swear,
 But not otherwise save that Gawain for her sake should this strife forbear.
 Then should Gramoflanz be forgiven, if *he*, too, would forgive the ill
 Once done by King Lot, her kinsman—so Arthur should speak her will.
 Then Arthur the wise and courteous, he brought the tale again,
 And King Gramoflanz, for his garland, henceforward must mourn in vain.
 And his hatred to Lot of Norway it passed as the snow flakes melt
 In the sun, 'neath the glance of Itonjé, and anger no more he felt.
 And the while he sat beside her he said to her bidding, yea,—
 Then they spake, Gawain came hither with his knights in brave array,
 And their names I may not tell ye, nor the land in which each was born;
 But here love had banished sorrow, and sadness was overworn.
 Then the Duchess, Orgelusé, and her gallant men and true,
 With part of the host of Klingsor, with Gawain nearer drew;
 And the covering 'gainst wind and weather from the king's tent they took away,
 And thither came good Arnivé with Sangivé and Kondrie alway,
 They came at King Arthur's bidding where men words of peace would speak,
 (He who counteth this but a small thing, at his will may a greater seek.)
 Then Iofreit, Gawain's comrade, by her white hand, within the tent
 Led the Duchess, fair and stately, and on this was she courteous bent,
 That the three queens should go before her—Brandelidelein they kissed,
 Then she followed, proud Orgelusé, nor the monarch her greeting missed.
 Then Gramoflanz stepped towards her, atonement he fain would make,
 From her sweet lips the kiss of forgiveness as token of peace he'd take;
 And the lady was moved to weeping, for she thought of her true love slain,
 And the faith and the sorrow of women did her heart to such woe constrain.
 Then Gramoflanz and Sir Gawain with a kiss put an end to strife;
 And Arthur gave maid Itonjé to King Gramoflanz to wife,
 For truly and long had he served her; and Bené was glad that day—
 And another for love's sake sorrowed, and his sorrow was put away,
 For Lischois, the Duke of Gowerzein, won fair Kondrie for his own,
 And, I ween, were her love not his portion his life little joy had known.
 To the Turkowit, brave Florant, as his wife King Arthur gave
 Her who wedded King Lot aforetime, and her love a man well might crave;
 'Twas a gift such as love beseemeth, and the knight took it joyfully—
 For the king, he was aye free-handed, and he gave such gifts readily!
 To this end had he well bethought him, and counsel wise had ta'en,
 And soon as his speech was ended, the Duchess, she spake again,
 And she said that her love Sir Gawain had conquered with valiant hand,
 And henceforth he of right was master alike of her life and land.
 And many a knight who hearkened he thought her speech ill to hear,
 For they fought for her love, and had broken in her service full many a spear.
 Gawain, and they who rode with him, Arnivé, and the Duchess fair,
 And many a lovely lady prayed leave of the monarch there.
 And Parzival, he went with them—Sangivé and maid Kondrie
 They rode hence, but with King Arthur she abode still, fair Itonjé.
 And the wedding feast that was holden was a feast beyond compare;
 And Guinevere took Itonjé, and her true love, within her care,
 The gallant king who with knighthood full many a prize had won,

And for love and desire of Itonjé full many brave deeds had done.
 And many they sought their lodging who for love's sake must sorrow sore;
 And how that night they had feasted, of that will we think no more—
 But they who for love did service, who knew of true love the might,
 They would that the day was ended, for fairer they deemed the night.
 Then King Gramoflanz sent this message (he bethought him in his pride)
 To his men, who, before Rosche-Sabbins, lay camped by the water-side.
 They should spare nor pains nor labour, but their tents should they strike straightway,
 And hither, with all his army, should they hasten ere break of day.
 And his marshal here must seek him a fitting place and fair—
 'Each prince by himself be encamped, and ye shall for myself prepare
 Such goodly state and royal as well shall beseem a king,
 Nor spare ye the cost'—'Twas nightfall ere this word to the host they bring.
 And many a man must sorrow who had learnt from a woman woe,—
 Whose love to the winds is scattered, and who ne'er doth rewarding know
 For his service, to grief he speedeth, and naught shall his steps delay,
 Save only the help of a woman o'ertaketh him on his way.
 But Parzival, he bethought him of his wife so fair and sweet,
 How pure she was, and how gentle—Did he ne'er another greet,
 And offer for fair love service, and, wavering, love anew?
 Nay, nay, he was far from such dealings, and naught of such love he knew!
 For a mighty faith so guarded his body alike and heart
 That never a woman living might have in his love a part,
 Save only his queen and lady, Kondwiramur, the flower
 Of women, Love's fairest blossom, with none should she share her power.
 And he thought, 'Since to Love I wakened but ill hath Love dealt with me,
 Of Love was I born, how comes it that I must from her presence flee?
 Tho' my hand for the Grail be seeking yet desire it doth rend my heart,
 And I yearn for her sweet embraces; ah, too long have we dwelt apart!
 Shall I look with mine eyes on rejoicing while my heart seeth naught but woe?
 The twain fit but ill together, and no man thereby shall know
 High courage, a knight befitting—Now Good Fortune direct my way,
 And show me what best beseemeth!' His harness before him lay,
 And he thought, 'Since to me that lacketh with which others are richly blest,—
 The love in whose sweet fulfilment many sad hearts have found their rest—
 Since this sorrow must be my portion I care not what else my lot,
 Little reck I what shall befall me, since my joy Heaven willeth not!
 And thou, for whose love I am yearning, were it so both with me and thee,
 That our hearts ever dreamed of parting, nor our love from all doubt were free,
 It might well be that with another joy and blessing again were mine,
 But thy love it so fast doth hold me, I may rest on no heart but thine!
 And for aye am I Sorrow's captive! Now Good Fortune bring joy to all
 Who find peace in fair Love's fulfilment, they are blessed whate'er befall—
 May God give to this folk rejoicing! But I from their joy must flee,
 And wend lonely as of aforetime, since gladness is not for me!
 Then he stretched out his hand to his harness, and as oft was his wont of yore,
 Unaided he girt it on him, and soon was he armed once more.
 Now sorrow anew he seeketh—When he, who from joy would fly,
 Had armed himself, his charger he saddled right speedily,
 And his shield and spear were ready—O'er his loss did they wail next morn,
 For no eye looked on his departing, he rode thence ere the day was born.

BOOK XV FEIREFIS

Now many were sorely angered that I told not this tale afore
 Since it wearied them naught in the hearing—Now my words I withhold no more,

But I give ye to wit full truly, as my mouth may the story tell,
 The end of this wondrous venture for methinks it shall please ye well.
 Ye shall know how the king, Anfortas, of his wound was made whole again—
 Of the queen doth the venture tell us, who in far Pelrapär did reign;
 How she kept a pure heart and loyal till the day of her great reward,
 And earth's fairest crown was her guerdon at the hand of her faithful lord.
 Ye shall hear the tale of its winning, if my skill fail me not alway;
 Yet first must ye list the labour that Parzival wrought that day.
 Now, tho' dauntless his hand had striven, but as children his foemen all,
 And ne'er would I risk my hero might I rule that which shall befall.
 I must sorrow sore for his peril, and fain would I speak him free,
 But now must I trust that Good Fortune the shield of his heart may be.
 For purity, and high courage, side by side in his heart they lay,
 And ne'er had he cherished cowardice, nor shrunk from the knightly fray;
 And I deem this shall surely give him such strength he his life may hold,
 Since fierce strife draweth nigh unto him, and his foe is a hero bold.
 For he meeteth a prince of battles who dauntless to strife doth ride,
 And unbaptized was the foeman who rode here in his heathen pride.
 Full soon had he come, our hero, to a mighty woodland shade,
 And without, in the light of the dawning, his armour a knight displayed.
 'Twere a marvel could I, a poor man, of the riches now speak to ye
 That the heathen he bare as his decking, so costly their worth should be.
 If more than enough I told ye, yet more would be left to tell;
 Yet I would not his wealth were hidden—What of riches, I ween, shall dwell
 In Bretagne alike and England, and be tribute to Arthur's might,
 They had paid not the stones that, shining, glowed fair on his armour bright.
 His blazoned coat was costly, and naught but the truth I say,
 Ruby and Chalcedony, ye had held them not fair that day.
 And bright as the sun was his vesture, on the mount of Agremontein,
 In the glowing fires, Salamanders had welded that garment's shine.
 There jewels rare and precious, with never a fault or flaw,
 Glowed dark and light; of their nature, I ween, I can tell no more!
 His desire was for love's rewarding, and the winning of high renown,
 He had won from the hands of fair women the jewels that his pride did crown.
 For the favour Frau Minne showed him with joy did his proud heart beat,
 And it swelled high with manly courage, as is for a lover meet.
 As reward for his deeds of knighthood on his helmet a beast he bare,
 Ecidemon, all poisonous serpents they must of its power beware,
 For of life and of strength doth it rob them, if they smell it but from afar—
 Thopedissimonté, Assigarzionté, Thasmé, and Arabia,
 They scarce of such silk might boast them as was covering for his steed—
 He sought, that mighty heathen, in a woman's love his meed,
 And therefore he bravely decked him, and fain would his courage prove,
 And his manhood, it urged him onward to battle for sake of love.
 Now the knight, so young and gallant, in a haven beside the wood,
 But little known, on the water had anchored his ships so good.
 And his armies were five-and-twenty, and they knew not each other's speech—
 'Twas a token fair of his riches, and the lands that his power might reach,
 As the armies, so were the kingdoms that did service unto his hand—
 And Moors and Saracens were they, and unlike was each warlike band,
 And the hue of their skins was diverse—Thus gathered from lands afar
 Ye might see in his mighty army strange weapons of heathen war.
 So thus, in search of adventure, from his army this man would ride,
 In the woodland green he wandered, and waited what should betide.
 And since thus it well doth please them, so let them ride, these kings,

Alone, in search of ventures, and the fair fame that combat brings.
Yet Parzival rode not lonely, methinks he had comrades twain,
Himself, and the lofty courage that lord o'er his soul did reign.
And that he so bravely fought here might win from a woman praise,
If falsehood should not mislead her, that injustice should rule her ways.
So spurred they against each other, who were lambs in their purity,
Yet as lions were they bold and dauntless, 'twas a sight for a man to see!
Ah! woe is me for their meeting, for the world and its ways are wide,
And they well might have spared each other, nor, guiltless, to battle ride.
I should sorrow for him whom I brought here, save my heart did this comfort hold,
That the Grail shall with strength endue him, and Love shelter the hero bold,
Since he was of the twain the servant, nor his heart ever wavering knew,
And ever his hand was ready to serve them with service true.
My skill little wit doth give me this combat that here befell,
In fitting words and knightly, from beginning to end to tell.
But the eye of each flashed triumph as the coming foe he saw,
And the heart of each knight waxed joyful, as they nearer to battle draw.
Yet sorrow, I ween, was nigh them, true hearts, from all falsehood free,
And each bare the heart of the other, and should comrade and stranger be!
Nor may I asunder part them, the paynim and Christian knight,
Hatred they show to each other, tho' no cause have they here for fight.
And methinks this of joy shall rob them, who, as true women, share their pain
Who risk their lives for a woman! May they part, ere one here be slain!
As the lion-cub, that its mother beareth dead, doth to life awake
At the awful voice of its father, so these twain, as the spear-shafts break
Arouse to fresh life, and to honour, I ween, are they newly born,
For many a joust have they ridden and many a spear outworn.
Then they tighten the hanging bridle, and they take to their aim good care,
That each on the shield of the other, as he willeth, shall smite him fair.
And no point do they leave unguarded, and they give to their seat good heed,
As men who are skilled in jousting, and sharply each spurs his steed.
And bravely the joust was ridden, and each gorget asunder broke,
And the spears bent not, but in splinters they flew from each mighty stroke;
And sore was he wroth, the heathen, that this man might his joust abide,
For never a knight but had fallen who a course 'gainst his spear would ride.
Think ye that their swords they wielded as their chargers together drew?
Yea, the combat was sharp and bitter, and each must give proof anew
Alike of his skill and his manhood—The strange beast, Ecidemon,
Had many a wound, and beneath it the helmet sore blows had won;
And the horses were hot and wearied, and many new turns they tried—
Then down they sprung from their chargers, and their sword-blades afresh they plied.
And the heathen wrought woe to the Christian, 'Thasmé!' was his battle-cry,
And when 'Tabronit!' he shouted he drew ever a step anigh.
And the Christian, he showed his valour in many an onslaught bold;
So pressed they upon each other—Nor would I the tale withhold
Of how the fight was foughten, yet must I the strife bemoan,
How, one flesh and one blood thus sharing, each wrought evil unto his own;
For both were the sons of one father, and brothers, I ween, were they,
And methinks upon such foundation faith and friendship their stone should lay!
And love ne'er had failed the heathen, and his heart was for combat fain,
For the love of Queen Sekundillé fresh honour he thought to gain;
Tribalibot's land she gave him, and she was his shield in strife—
So bravely he fought, how think ye that the Christian might guard his life?
On love let his thoughts be steadfast, else sure is he here undone,
And he hath from the hand of the heathen in this combat his death-blow won.

O thou Grail, by thy lofty virtue such fate from thy knight withhold!
 Kondwiramur, thine husband in such deadly stress behold!
 Here he standeth, of both the servant, in such danger and peril sore
 That as naught ye may count the ventures he hath dared for your sake of yore!
 Then on high flashed the sword of the heathen, and many such blow had slain,
 To his knee Parzival was beaten—Now see how they fought, the twain,
 If twain ye will still account them, yet in sooth shall they be but one,
 For my brother and I are one body, e'en as husband and wife are one!
 The heathen wrought woe to the Christian—Of Asbestos, I ween, his shield,
 That wondrous wood that never to flame or decay shall yield;
 I' sooth, right well she loved him who gave him a gift so fair,
 Turquoise, Chrysoprase, Emerald, Ruby, rich jewels beyond compare
 Decked with shining lines its surface, on the boss shone a precious stone,
 Antrax, afar they call it, as Carbuncle it here is known.
 And as token of love, for his guarding, Sekundillé the queen would give
 That wondrous beast, Ecidemon—in her favour he fain would live,
 And e'en as she willed he bare it, as his badge, did that gallant knight—
 Here with purity faith joined issue, and truth with high truth would fight.
 For love's sake upon the issue of this combat each risked his life,
 Each had pledged his hand to the winning of honour and fame in strife;
 And the Christian, in God he trusted since the day that he rode away
 From the hermit, whose faithful counsel had bidden him trust alway
 In Him who could turn his sorrow into bliss without thought of bale—
 To Him should he pray for succour, whose succour should never fail.
 And fierce and strong was the heathen, when 'Tabronit,' he cried,
 For there, 'neath the mount Kaukasus did the queen, Sekundillé', abide;
 Thus gained he afresh high courage 'gainst him who ne'er knew of yore
 The weight of such deadly combat, for in sooth was he pressed full sore—
 To defeat was he aye a stranger, and ne'er had he seen its face,
 Tho' his foemen right well must know it, as they yielded them to his grace!
 With skill do they wield their weapons, and sparks spring from the helmets fair,
 And a whistling wind ariseth as the blades cleave the summer air;
 God have Gamuret's son in His keeping! and the prayer it shall stand for both,
 For the twain shall be one nor, I think me, to own it were either loth.
 For had they but known each other their stake ne'er had been so great,
 For blessing, and joy, and honour, were risked on that combat's fate,
 For he who shall here be victor, if true brother and knight he be,
 Of all this world's joy is he forfeit, nor from grief may his heart be free!
 Sir Parzival, why delay thee to think on thy queen and wife,
 Her purity and her beauty, if here thou wouldst save thy life?
 For the heathen, he bare two comrades who kindled his strength anew,
 The one, in his strong heart, steadfast, lay ever a love so true;
 And the other, the precious jewels that burnt with a mystic glow,
 Thro' whose virtue his strength waxed greater, and his heart must fresh courage know.
 And it grieveth me sore that the Christian was weary and faint with fight,
 Nor swiftly might he avoid him, and his blows they were robbed of might;
 And if the twain fail to aid thee, O thou gallant Parzival,
 Thy queen and the Grail, then I think me this thought it shall help thee well,
 Shall thy fair babes thus young be orphaned? Kardeiss and Lohengrin,
 Whom thy wife, e'en as thou didst leave her, for her joy and her hope must win—
 For children thus born in wedlock, the pledge of a love so pure,
 I ween are a man's best blessing, and a joy that shall aye endure!
 New strength did he win, the Christian, and he thought, none too soon, I ween,
 On his love so true and faithful, on Kondwiramur, his queen,
 How he won his wife at the sword's point, when sparks from the helm did spring

'Neath the mighty blows he dealt him, Klamidé, the warrior king.
 'Tabronit! and Thasmé!' and above them rung clear his battle-cry,
 'Pelrapâr!' as aloud he cried it to his aid did his true love fly,
 O'er kingdoms four she sought him, and her love gave him strength anew,
 And lo! from the shield of the heathen the costly splinters flew,
 Each one a hundred marks' worth—and the sword so strong and keen
 That Ither of Gaheviess bare first brake sheer on the helmet's sheen,
 And the stranger, so rich and valiant, he stumbled, and sought his knee—
 For God, He no longer willed it that Parzival lord should be
 Of this weapon of which in his folly he had robbed a gallant knight—
 Then up sprang afresh the heathen who ne'er before fell in fight,
 Not yet is the combat ended, and the issue for both shall stand
 In the power of the God of battles, and their life lieth in His hand!
 And a gallant knight was the heathen, and he spake out, right courteously,
 (Tho' the tongue was the tongue of a heathen yet in fair French his speech should be,)
 'Now I see well, thou gallant hero, thou hast no sword wherewith to fight,
 And the fame shall be small I win me if I fight with an unarmed knight,
 But rest thee awhile from conflict, and tell me who thou shalt be,
 For the fame that so long I cherished it surely had fallen to thee
 Had the blow not thy sword-blade shattered—Now, let peace be betwixt us twain,
 And our wearied limbs will we rest here ere we get us to strife again.'
 Then down on the grass they sat them, and courteous and brave were they,
 Nor too young nor too old for battle—fit foemen they were that day!
 Then the heathen, he spake to the Christian, 'Believe me, Sir Knight, that ne'er
 Did I meet with a man so worthy the crown of such fame to bear
 As a knight in strife may win him—Now, I prithee, tell thou to me
 Thy name, and thy race, that my journey may here not unfruitful be!
 Quoth the son of fair Herzeleide, 'Thro' *fear* shall I tell my name?
 For thou askest of me such favour as a victor alone may claim!'
 Spake the heathen prince from Thasmé, 'Then that shame shall be mine, I ween,
 For first will I speak my title, and the name that mine own hath been;
 "Feirefis Angevin" all men call me, and such riches are mine, I trow,
 That the folk of full many a kingdom 'neath my sceptre as vassals bow!'
 Then, e'en as the words were spoken, to the heathen quoth Parzival,
 'How shall "*Angevin*" be thy title, since as heirdom to *me* it fell,
 Anjou, with its folk and its castles, its lands and its cities fair?
 Nay, choose thee some other title, if thou, courteous, wouldst hear my prayer!
 If thro' thee I have lost my kingdom, and the fair town Béalzenan,
 Then wrong hadst thou wrought upon me ere ever our strife began!
 If one of us twain is an Angevin then by birthright that one am I!—
 And yet, of a truth, was it told me, that afar 'neath an Eastern sky,
 There dwelleth a dauntless hero, who, with courage and knightly skill,
 Such love and such fame hath won him that he ruleth them at his will.
 And men say, he shall be my brother—and that all they who know his name
 Account him a knight most valiant, and he weareth the crown of fame!'
 In a little space he spake further, 'If, Sir Knight, I thy face might see,
 I should know if the truth were told me, if in sooth thou art kin to me.
 Sir Knight, wilt thou trust mine honour, then loosen thine helmet's band,
 I will swear till once more thou arm thee to stay from all strife mine hand!
 Then out he spake, the heathen, 'Of such strife have I little fear,
 For e'en were my body naked, my sword, I still hold it here!
 Of a sooth must thou be the vanquished, for since broken shall be thy sword
 What availeth thy skill in combat keen death from thine heart to ward,
 Unless, of free will, I spare thee? For, ere thou couldst clasp me round,
 My steel, thro' the iron of thy harness, thy flesh and thy bone had found!'

Then the heathen, so strong and gallant, he dealt as a knight so true,
 'Nor mine nor thine shall this sword be!' and straight from his hand it flew,
 Afar in the wood he cast it, and he quoth, 'Now, methinks, Sir Knight,
 The chance for us both shall be equal, if further we think to fight!'
 Quoth Feirefis, 'Now, thou hero, by thy courteous breeding fair,
 Since in sooth thou shalt have a brother, say, what face doth that brother bear?
 And tell me here of his colour, e'en as men shall have told it thee.'
 Quoth the Waleis, 'As written parchment, both black and white is he,
 For so hath Ekuba told me.' 'Then that brother am I alway;
 Quoth the heathen—Those knights so gallant, but little they made delay,
 But they loosed from their heads the helmet, and they made them of iron bare,
 And Parzival deemed that he found there a gift o'er all others fair,
 For straightway he knew the other, (as a magpie, I ween, his face,)
 And hatred and wrath were slain here in a brotherly embrace.
 Yea, friendship far better 'seemed them, who owed to one sire their life,
 Than anger, methinks, and envy—Truth and Love made an end of strife.
 Then joyful he spake, the heathen, 'Now well shall it be with me,
 And I thank the gods of my people that Gamuret's son I see.
 Blest be Juno, the queen of heaven, since, methinks, she hath ruled it so,
 And Jupiter, by whose virtue and strength I such bliss may know,
 Gods and goddesses, I will love ye, and worship your strength for aye—
 And blest be those shining planets, 'neath the power of whose guiding ray
 I hither have made my journey—For ventures I here would seek,
 And found *thee*, brother, sweet and awful, whose strong hand hath made me weak.
 And blest be the dew, and the breezes, that this morning my brow have fanned.
 Ah! thou courteous knight who holdest love's key in thy valiant hand!
 Ah! happy shall be the woman whose eyes on thy face shall light,
 Already is bliss her portion who seeth so fair a sight!'
 'Ye speak well, I would fain speak better of a full heart, had I the skill;
 Yet alas! for I lack the wisdom, tho' God knoweth, of right goodwill
 The fame of your worth and valour by my words would I higher raise,
 And as eye, and as heart should serve me, the twain, they should speak your praise;
 As your fame and your glory lead them, so behind in your track they fare—
 And ne'er from the hand of a foeman such peril hath been my share
 As the peril your hand hath wrought me! and sooth are these words I say.'
 In this wise quoth the knight of Kanvoleis; yet Feirefis spake alway;
 'With wisdom and skill, I wot well, hath Jupiter fashioned thee,
 Thou true and gallant hero! Nor thy speech shall thus distant be,
 For "ye" thou shalt no more call me, of one sire did we spring we twain.'
 And with brotherly love he prayed him he would from such speech refrain
 And henceforward '*thou*' to call him, yet Parzival deemed it ill,
 And he spake, 'Now, your riches, brother, shall be e'en as the Baruch's still,
 And ye of us twain are the elder, my poverty and my youth
 They forbid me "*thou*" to call ye, or discourteous were I in truth.
 Then the Prince of Tribalibot, joyful, with many a word would praise
 His god, Jupiter, and to Juno thanksgiving he fain would raise,
 Since so well had she ruled the weather, that the port to which he was bound
 He had safely reached, and had landed, and there had a brother found.
 Side by side did they sit together, and neither forgot the grace
 Of courtesy, to the other, each knight fain had yielded place.
 Then the heathen spake, 'My brother, wilt thou sail with me to my land,
 Then two kingdoms, rich and powerful, will I give thee into thine hand.
 Thy father and mine, he won them when King Eisenhart's life was run,
 Zassamank and Assagog are they—to no man he wrong hath done,
 Save in that he left me orphaned—of the ill that he did that day

As yet have I not avenged me, for an ill deed it was alway.
 For his wife, the queen who bare me, thro' her love must she early die,
 When she knew herself love-bereavèd, and her lord from her land did fly.
 Yet gladly that knight would I look on, for his fame hath been told to me
 As the best of knights, and I journey my father's face to see!
 Then Parzival made him answer, 'Yea I, too, I saw him ne'er;
 Yet all men they speak well of him, and his praises all lands declare,
 And ever in strife and conflict to better his fame he knew,
 And his valour was high exalted, and afar from him falsehood flew.
 And women he served so truly that all true folk they praised his name,
 And all that should deck a Christian lent honour unto his fame,
 For his faith it for aye stood steadfast, and all false deeds did he abhor,
 But followed his true heart's counsel—Thus ever I heard of yore
 From the mouth of all men who knew him, that man ye were fain to see,
 And I ween ye would do him honour if he yet on this earth might be,
 And sought for fame as aforetime—The delight of all women's eyes
 Was he, till king Ipomidon with him strove for knighthood's prize,
 At Bagdad the joust was ridden, and there did his valiant life
 For love's sake become death's portion, and there was he slain in strife;
 In a knightly joust we lost him from whose life do we spring, we twain;
 If here ye would seek our father, then the seas have ye sailed in vain!
 'Alas, for the endless sorrow!' quoth the knight. 'Is my father dead?
 Here joy have I lost, tho' it well be that joy cometh in its stead.
 In this self-same hour have I lost me great joy, and yet joy have found,
 For myself, and thou, and my father, we three in one bond are bound;
 For tho' men as *three* may hold us, yet I wot well we are but *one*,
 And no wise man he counts that kinship 'twixt father, methinks, and son,
 For in truth for more must he hold it—With *thyself* hast thou fought to-day,
 To strife with *myself* have I ridden, and I went near myself to slay;
 Thy valour in good stead stood us, from myself hast thou saved my life—
 Now Jupiter see this marvel, since thy power so hath ruled the strife
 That from death hast thou here withheld us!' Then tears streamed from his heathen eyes,
 As he laughed and wept together—Yea, a Christian such truth might prize,
 For our baptism truth should teach us, since there are we named anew
 In the Name of Christ, and all men they hold the Lord Christ for true!
 Quoth the heathen, e'en as I tell ye, 'No longer will we abide
 In this place, but if thou, my brother, for a short space with me wilt ride,
 From the sea to the land will I summon, that their power be made known to thee,
 The richest force that Juno e'er guided across the sea.
 And in truth, without thought of falsehood, full many a gallant knight
 Will I show thee, who do me service, and beneath my banners fight,
 With me shalt thou ride towards them.' Then Parzival spake alway,
 'Have ye then such power o'er these people that your bidding they wait to-day
 And all the days ye are absent?' Quoth the heathen, 'Yea, even so,
 If for half a year long I should leave them, not a man from the place would go,
 Be he rich or poor, till I bade him. Well victualled their ships shall be,
 And neither the horse nor his rider setteth foot on the grassy lea,
 Save only to fetch them water from the fountain that springeth fair,
 Or to lead their steeds to the meadow to breathe the fresh summer air.'
 Then Parzival quoth to his brother, 'If it be so, then follow me
 To where many a gracious maiden, and fair pleasures, ye well may see,
 And many a courteous hero who shall be to us both akin—
 Near by with a goodly army lieth Arthur, the Breton king,
 'Twas only at dawn I left them, a great host and fair are they,
 And many a lovely lady shall gladden our eyes to-day.'

When he heard that he spake of women, since he fain for their love would live,
 He quoth, 'Thou shalt lead me thither, but first thou shalt answer give
 To the question I here would ask thee—Of a truth shall we kinsmen see
 When we come to the court of King Arthur? For ever 'twas told to me
 That his name it is rich in honour, and he liveth as valiant knight'—
 Quoth Parzival, 'We shall see there full many a lady bright,
 Nor fruitless shall be our journey, our own folk shall we find there,
 The men of whose race we have sprung, men whose head shall a king's crown bear.'
 Nor longer the twain would sit there, and straightway did Parzival
 Seek again the sword of his brother that afar in the woodland fell,
 And again the hero sheathed it, and all hatred they put away,
 And e'en as true friends and brothers together they rode that day.
 Yet ere they might come to King Arthur men had heard of the twain a tale—
 On the self-same day it befell so that the host, they must sore bewail
 The loss of a gallant hero, since Parzival rode away—
 Then Arthur, he took good counsel, and he spake, 'Unto the eighth day
 Would they wait for Parzival's coming, nor forth from the field would fare'—
 And hither came Gramoflanz' army, and they many a ring prepare,
 And with costly tents do they deck them, and the proud knights are lodged full well,
 Nor might brides e'er win greater honour than here to this four befell.
 Then from Château Merveil rode thither a squire in the self-same hour,
 And he said, in their column mirrored, had they seen in their fair watch-tower
 A mighty fight, and a fearful—'And where'er men with swords have fought,
 I wot well, beside this combat their strife shall be held as naught.'
 And the tale did they tell to Gawain, as he sat by King Arthur's side,
 And this knight, and that, spake wondering to whom might such strife betide?
 Quoth Arthur the king, 'Now I wager that I know of the twain *one* knight,
 'Twas my nephew of Kanvoleis fought there, who left us ere morning light!'
 And now, lo the twain rode hither—They had foughten a combat fair,
 As helmet and shield sore dented with sword-stroke might witness bear.
 And well skilled were the hands that had painted these badges of strife, I trow,
 (For 'tis meet in the lust of combat that a knight's hand such skill should show,)
 Then they rode by the camp of King Arthur—As the heathen knight rode past
 Full many a glance of wonder at his costly gear was cast.
 And with tents the plain was covered—Then rode they to Gawain's ring,
 And before his tent they halted—Did men a fair welcome bring,
 And lead them within, and gladly behold them? Yea, even so,
 And Gawain, he rode swiftly after when he did of their coming know;
 For e'en as he sat by King Arthur he saw that his tent they sought,
 And, as fitted a courteous hero, joyful greeting to them he brought.
 And as yet they bare their armour—Then Gawain, the courteous knight,
 He bade his squires disarm them—In the stress of the deadly fight
 Ecidemon, the beast, was cloven; the robe that the heathen ware
 In many a place bare token of the blows that had been its share,
 'Twas a silk of Saranthasmé, decked with many a precious stone,
 And beneath, rich, snow-white, blazoned with his bearings his vesture shone.
 And one over against the other stood the gems in a double row;
 By the wondrous Salamanders was it woven in fierce flame's glow!
 All this glory a woman gave him, who would stake on his skill in strife
 Her crown alike and her kingdom, as she gave him her love and life.
 'Twas the fair Queen Sekundillé (and gladly he did her will,
 And were it for joy or for sorrow he hearkened her bidding still)
 And, e'en as her true heart willed it, of her riches was he the lord,
 For her love, as his rightful guerdon, had he won him with shield and sword.
 Then Gawain, he bade his people of the harness to have good care,

That naught should be moved from its station, shield, or helmet, or vesture fair.
 And in sooth a gift too costly e'en the blazoned coat had been
 If poor were the maid who a love-gift would give to her knight, I ween,
 So rich were the stones that decked it, the harness of pieces four—
 And where wisdom with goodwill worketh, and of riches there be full store,
 There love well can deck the loved one! And proud Feirefis, he strove
 With such zeal for the honour of women, he well was repaid by Love!
 And soon as he doffed his harness they gazed on the wondrous sight,
 And they who might speak of marvels said, in sooth, that this heathen knight,
 Feirefis, was strange to look on! and wondrous marks he bore—
 Quoth Gawain to Parzival, 'Cousin, I ne'er saw his like before,
 Now who may he be, thy comrade? For in sooth he is strange to see!'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Are we kinsmen, then thy kinsman this knight shall be,
 As Gamuret's name may assure thee—Of Zassamank is he king,
 There my father he won Belakané who this prince to the world did bring.'
 Then Gawain, he kissed the heathen—Now the noble Feirefis
 Was black and white all over, save his mouth was half red, I wis!
 Then they brought to the twain fair raiment, and I wot well their cost was dear.
 (They were brought forth from Gawain's chamber.) Then the ladies, they drew anear,
 And the Duchess she bade Sangivé and Kondrie first kiss the knight
 Ere she and Arnivé proffered in greeting their lips so bright.
 And Feirefis gazed upon them, and, methinks, he was glad at heart
 At the sight of their lovely faces, and in joy had he lot and part.
 Then Gawain spake to Parzival, 'Cousin, thou hast found a new battle-field,
 If aright I may read the token of thy helmet and splintered shield,
 Sore strife shall have been your comrade, both thine and thy brother's too!
 Say, with whom did ye fight so fiercely?' Then Parzival spake anew,
 'No fiercer fight have I foughten, my brother's hand pressed me sore
 To defend me, no charm more potent than defence 'gainst death's stroke I bore.
 As this stranger, whom yet I knew well, I smote, my sword brake in twain,
 Yet no fear did he show, and 'vantage he scorned of mischance to gain,
 For afar did he cast his sword-blade, since he feared lest 'gainst me he sin,
 Yet naught did he know when he spared me that we twain were so near akin.
 But now have I won his friendship, and his love, and with right goodwill
 Would I do to him faithful service as befitteth a brother still!'
 Then Gawain spake, 'They brought me tidings of a dauntless strife and bold,
 In Château Merveil the country for six miles may ye well behold,
 The pillar within the watch-tower showeth all that within that space
 Doth chance,—and he spake, King Arthur, that *one* who there strife did face,
 Should be *thou* cousin mine of Kingrivals, now hast thou the tidings brought,
 And we know of a sooth the combat was even as we had thought.
 Now believe me, the truth I tell thee, for eight days here our feast we'd hold
 In great pomp, and await thy coming, shouldst thou seek us, thou hero bold.
 Now rest here, ye twain, from your combat—but methinks, since ye thus did fight,
 Ye shall each know the other better, and hatred shall own love's might.'
 That eve would Gawain sup early, since his cousin of far Thasmé,
 Feirefis Angevin, and his brother, had tasted no food that day.
 And high and long were the cushions that they laid in a ring so wide,
 And many a costly covering of silk did their softness hide.
 And long, and wide, and silken, were the clothes that above them went,
 And the store of Klingsor's riches they spread forth within the tent.
 Then four costly carpets silken, and woven so fair to see,
 Did they hang one against the other, so the tale it was told to me;
 And beneath them, of down were the pillows, and each one was covered fair,
 And in such wise the costly couches for the guests would the squires prepare.

And so wide was the ring that within it six pavilions right well might stand
 Nor the tent ropes should touch each other—(Now wisdom doth fail mine hand,
 I will speak no more of these marvels). Then straightway Gawain he sent
 To King Arthur, he fain would tell him who abode here within his tent,
 He had come, the mighty heathen, of whom Ekuba erst did tell
 On Plimizöl's plain! And the tidings they rejoiced King Arthur well.
 And he who should bear the tidings, he was Iofreit, and Idol's son;
 And he bade the king sup early, and so soon as the meal was done,
 With his knights and his host of ladies, to ride forth a train so fair,
 And a fit and worthy welcome for Gamuret's son prepare.
 Quoth the king, 'All who here are worthy, of a sooth, will I bring with me.'
 Quoth Iofreit, 'Ye fain will see him, so courteous a knight is he,
 And a marvel is he to look on—From great riches he forth must fare,
 For the price of his coat emblazoned is such as no man might bear,
 And no hand might count its equal, not in Löver or Brittany,
 Or in England, or e'en from Paris to Wissant beside the sea—
 Nay, all the rich lands between them, were their wealth in the balance weighed,
 Then the cost of his goodly raiment, I think me, were yet unpaid!'
 Then again came the knight Iofreit, when he to the king had told
 The guise that should best befit him when he greeted the heathen bold.
 And within the tent of Gawain the seats were ordered fair,
 In courteous rank and seemly, and the guests to the feast repair.
 And the vassals of Orgelusé, and the heroes within her train
 Who gladly for love had served her, they sate there beside Gawain.
 Their seats they were on his right hand, on his left were Klingsor's knights,
 And over against the heroes sat many a lady bright,
 All they who were Klingsor's captives, in sooth were they fair of face,
 And Parzival and his brother, by the maidens they took their place.
 Then the Turkowit, Sir Florant, and Sangivé, that noble queen,
 Sat over against each other, and in like wise, the board between,
 Sat Gowerzein's Duke, brave Lischois, and his wife, the fair Kondrie.
 Iofreit and Gawain forgot not each other's mate to be,
 As of old would they sit together, and together, as comrades, eat.
 The Duchess, with bright eyes shining, by Arnivé must find her seat,
 Nor forgot they to serve each other with courteous and kindly grace—
 At the side sat fair Orgelusé, while Arnivé by Gawain found place.
 And all shame and discourteous bearing from the circle must take their flight,
 And courteous they bare the viands to each maid and each gallant knight.
 Then Feirefis looked on his brother, and he spake unto Parzival;
 'Now Jupiter ruled my journey so that bliss to my lot would fall
 Since his aid shall have brought me hither, and here mine own folk I see,
 And I praise the sire that I knew not, of a gallant race was he!'
 Quoth the Waleis, 'Ye yet shall see them, a folk ye right well may love,
 With Arthur their king and captain, brave knights who their manhood prove.
 So soon as this feast is ended, as methinks it will be ere long,
 Ye shall see them come in their glory, many valiant men and strong.
 Of the knights of the good Round Table there shall sit at this board but three,
 Our host, and the knight Iofreit, and such honour once fell to me,
 In the days that I showed me worthy, that they prayed me I would be one
 Of their band, nor was I unwilling, but e'en as they spake 'twas done,'
 Now 'twas time, since all well had eaten, the covers to bear away
 From before both man and maiden, and this did the squires straightway.
 The host would no longer sit there; then the Duchess and Arnivé spake,
 And they prayed that the twain, Sangivé and Kondrie, they with them might take;
 And go to the strange-faced heathen, and entreat him in courteous wise—

When Feirefis saw them near him, from his seat did the prince arise,
And with Parzival, his brother, stepped forward the queens to meet,
By his hand did the Duchess take him, and with fair words the knight would greet;
And the ladies and knights who stood there she bade them be seated all—
Then the king and his host came riding, with many a trumpet call;
And they heard the sound of music, of tambour, and flute, and horn,
With many a blast drew nearer the king of Arnivé born;
And the heathen this pomp and rejoicing must hold for a worthy thing—
And Guinevere rode with King Arthur, so came they to Gawain's ring;
And goodly the train that followed of ladies and gallant knights,
And Feirefis saw among them fair faces with youth's tints bright;
And King Gramoflanz rode among them, for Arthur's guest was he,
And Itonjé, his love so loyal, true lady, from falsehood free!
Then the gallant host dismounted, with many a lady sweet,
And Guinevere bade Itonjé her nephew, the heathen, greet.
Then the queen herself drew anear him, and she kissed the knight Feirefis,
And Gramoflanz and King Arthur received him with friendly kiss;
And in honour they proffered service unto him, those monarchs twain,
And many a man of his kinsfolk to welcome the prince was fain.
And many a faithful comrade Feirefis Angevin had found,
Nor in sooth was he loth to own here that he stood upon friendly ground.
Down they sat them, both wife and husband, and many a gracious maid,
And many a knight might find there (if in sooth he such treasure prayed,)
From sweet lips sweet words of comfort—If for wooing such knight were fain,
Then from many a maid who sat there no hatred his prayer would gain,
No true woman shall e'er be wrathful if a true man for help shall pray,
For ever the right she holdeth to yield, or to say him 'Nay,'
And if labour win joy for payment then such guerdon shall true love give—
And I speak but as in my lifetime I have seen many true folk live—
And service sat there by rewarding, for in sooth 'tis a gracious thing
When a knight may his lady hearken, for joy shall such hearing bring.
And Feirefis sat by King Arthur, nor would either prince delay
To the question each asked the other courteous answer to make straightway—
Quoth King Arthur, 'May God be praised, for He honoureth us I ween,
Since this day within our circle so gallant a guest is seen,
No knight hath Christendom welcomed to her shores from a heathen land
Whom, an he desired my service, I had served with such willing hand!'
Quoth Feirefis to King Arthur, 'Misfortune hath left my side,
Since the day that my goddess Juno, with fair winds and a favouring tide,
Led my sail to this Western kingdom! Methinks that thou bearest thee
In such wise as he should of whose valour many tales have been told to me;
If indeed thou art called King Arthur, then know that in many a land
Thy name is both known and honoured, and thy fame o'er all knights doth stand.'
Quoth Arthur, 'Himself doth he honour who thus spake in my praise to thee
And to other folk, since such counsel he won of his courtesy
Far more than of my deserving—for he spake of his kindly will.
Yea, in sooth shall my name be Arthur, and the tale would I hearken still
Of how to this land thou camest, if for *love's* sake thou bearest shield,
Then thy love must be fair, since to please her thou ridest so far afield!
If her guerdon be not withholden then love's service shall wax more fair,
Else must many a maid win hatred from the knight who her badge doth bear!'
'Nay, 'twas otherwise,' quoth the heathen; 'Now learn how I came to thee,
I led such a mighty army, they who guardians of Troy would be,
And they who its walls besieged, the road to my hosts must yield—
If both armies yet lived, and lusted to face me on open field,

Then ne'er might they win the victory, but shame and defeat must know
 From me and my host, of a surety their force would I overthrow!—
 And many a fight had I foughten, and knightly deeds had done,
 Till as guerdon at length the favour of Queen Sekundill' I won.
 And e'en as her wish so my will is, and her love to my life is guide,
 She bade me to give with a free hand, and brave knights to keep at my side,
 And this must I do to please her; and I did even as she would,
 'Neath my shield have I won as vassals full many a warrior good,
 And her love it hath been my guerdon—An Ecidemon I bear
 On my shield, even as she bade me, at her will I this token wear.
 Since then, came I e'er in peril, if but on my love I thought
 She hath helped me, yea, Jupiter never such succour in need hath brought!'

Quoth Arthur, 'Thy gallant father, Gamuret, he hath left thee heir
 To the heart that on woman's service thus loveth afar to fare.
 Of such service I too can tell thee, for but seldom hath greater deeds
 Been done for a woman's honour, or to win of her love the meed,
 Than were done for the sake of the Duchess who sitteth beside us here.
 For her love many gallant heroes have splintered full many a spear,
 Yea, the spear-shafts were e'en as a forest! And many have paid the cost
 Of her service in bitter sorrow, and in joy and high courage lost!'

And then the tale he told him of the fame that Gawain had found,
 And the knights of the host of Klingsor, and the heroes who sat around,
 And of Parzival, his brother, how he fought fierce combats twain,
 For the sake of Gramoflanz' garland, on Ioflanz' grassy plain;
 'And what other have been his ventures, who never himself doth spare
 As thro' the wide world he rideth, that shall he himself declare;
 For he seeketh a lofty guerdon, and he rideth to find the Grail.
 And here shall it be my pleasure that ye twain, without lack or fail,
 Shall tell me the lands and the peoples against whom ye shall both have fought.'

Quoth the heathen, 'I'll name the princes whom I here as my captives brought':
 'King Papirus of Trogodjenté, Count Behantins of Kalomedenté,
 Duke Farjelastis of Africk, and King Tridanz of Tinodent;
 King Liddamus of Agrippé, of Schipelpjonte King Amaspartins,
 King Milon of Nomadjentesin, of Agremontein, Duke Lippidins;
 Gabarins of Assigarzienté, King Translapins of Rivigatas,
 From Hiberborticon Count Filones, from Sotofeititon, Amincas,
 From Centrium, King Killicrates, Duke Tiridé of Elixodjon,
 And beside him Count Lysander, from Ipopotiticon.
 King Thoaris of Orastegentesin, from Satharthjonté Duke Alamis,
 And the Duke of Duscontemedon, and Count Astor of Panfatis.
 From Arabia King Zaroaster, and Count Possizonjus of Thiler,
 The Duke Sennes of Narjoclin, and Nourjenté's Duke, Acheinor,
 Count Edisson of Lanzesardin, Count Fristines of Janfusé,
 Meiones of Atropfagenté, King Jetakranc of Ganpfassasché,
 From Assagog and Zassamank princes, Count Jurans of Blemunzîn.
 And the last, I ween, shall a Duke be, Affinamus of Amantasîn!'

'Yet one thing for a shame I deemed it—In my kingdom 'twas told to me
 Gamuret Angevin, my father, the best of all knights should be
 That ever bestrode a charger—Then so was my will and mind,
 That, afar from my kingdom faring, my father I thought to find;
 And since then strife hath been my portion, for forth from my kingdoms twain
 A mighty host and powerful 'neath my guidance hath crossed the main,
 And I lusted for deeds of knighthood; if I came to a goodly land,
 Then I rested not till its glory paid tribute into mine hand.
 And thus ever I journeyed further—I won love from two noble queens,

Olympia and Klauditté; Sekundillé the third hath been.
 And well have I served fair women!—Now first must I learn to-day
 That my father is dead! My brother, the tale of thy ventures say.
 And Parzival quoth, 'Since I seek it, The Grail, in full many a fight,
 Both far and near, have I striven, in such wise as beseems a knight,
 And my hand of their fame hath robbed them who never before might fall—
 If it please ye the tale to hearken, lo! here will I name them all!
 'King Schirniel of Lirivoin, and his brother of Avendroin, King Mirabel,
 King Piblesun of Lorneparz, of Rozokarz, King Serabel,
 Of Sirneginz, King Senilgorz, and Strangedorz of Villegarunz,
 Rogedal the Count of Mirnetalle and Laudunal of Pleyedunz.
 From Semblidag King Zyrolan, from Itolac Onipreiz,
 From Zambron the Count Plenischanz, and Duke Jerneganz of Jeropleis,
 Count Longefiez of Teuteleunz, Duke Marangliess of Privegarz,
 From Lampregun Count Parfoyas, from Pictacon Duke Strennolas;
 Postefar of Laudundrehte, Askalon's fair king, Vergulacht,
 Duke Leidebron of Redunzehte, and from Pranzile Count Bogudaht,
 Collevâl of Leterbé, Jovedast of Arl, a Provençal,
 Count Karfodyas of Tripparûn, all these 'neath my spear must fall.
 In knightly joust I o'erthrew them the while I the Grail must seek!
 Would I say those I felled in *battle*, methinks I o'er-long must speak,
 It were best that I here keep silence—Of those who were known to me,
 Methinks that the greater number I here shall have named to ye!
 From his heart was he glad, the heathen, of his brother's mighty fame,
 That so many a gallant hero 'neath his hand had been put to shame,
 And he deemed in his brother's honour he himself should have honour won,
 And with many a word he thanked him for the deeds that he there had done.
 Then Gawain bade his squires bear hither (yet e'en as he knew it not)
 The costly gear of the heathen, and they held it was fair I wot.
 And knights alike and ladies, they looked on its decking rare,
 Corslet, and shield, and helmet, and the coat that was blazoned fair.
 Nor narrow nor wide the helmet—And a marvel great they thought
 The shine of the many jewels in the costly robe inwrought,
 And no man I ween shall ask me the power that in each did dwell,
 The light alike and the heavy, for I skill not the tale to tell;
 Far better might they have told it, Heraclius or Hercules
 And the Grecian Alexander; and better methinks than these
 Pythagoras, the wise man, for skilled in the stars was he,
 And so wise that no son of Adam I wot well might wiser be.
 Then the women they spake, 'What woman so e'er thus hath decked this knight
 If he be to her love unfaithful he hath done to his fame despite.'
 Yet some in such favour held him, they had been of his service fain—
 Methinks the unwonted colour of his face did their fancy gain!
 Then aside went the four, Gawain, Arthur, Gramoflanz, and Parzival,
 (And the women should care for the heathen, methinks it would please them well.)
 And Arthur willed ere the morrow a banquet, rich and fair,
 On the grassy plain before him they should without fail prepare,
 That Feirefis they might welcome as befitting so brave a guest.
 'Now be ye in this task not slothful, but strive, as shall seem ye best,
 That henceforth he be one of our circle, of the Table Round, a knight.'
 And they spake, they would win that favour, if so be it should seem him right.
 Then Feirefis, the rich hero, he brotherhood with them sware;
 And they quaffed the cup of parting, and forth to their tents would fare.
 And joy it came with the morning, if here I the truth may say,
 And many were glad at the dawning of a sweet and a welcome day.

Then the son of Uther Pendragon, King Arthur, in this wise spake:
For Round Table a silk so costly, Drianthasmé, he bade them take—
Ye have heard how it once was ordered, afar on Plimizöl's plain,
How they spread them there a Round Table, in such wise was it spread again—
'Twas cut in a round, and costly it was, and right fair to see,
And on the green turf around it the seats of the knights should be.
It was even a goodly gallop from the seats to the Table Round,
For the Table's self it was not, yet the likeness they there had found.
And a cowardly man might shame him to sit there with such gallant knights,
And with sin would his food be tainted since he ate it not there of right.
Thro' the summer night 'twas measured, the ring, both with thought and care,
And from one end unto the other with pomp they the seats prepare.
And the cost were too great for a poor king, as they saw it in noontide light,
When the trappings, so gay and costly, shone fair in the sun-rays bright.
Gramoflanz and Gawain would pay it, the cost, since within their land
He was but a guest, King Arthur, tho' he dealt with a generous hand.
And the night, it seldom cometh but, as it is wont, the sun
Bringeth back the day and the daylight when the hours of the night are run;
And e'en so it befell, and the dawning was clear and calm and bright,
And many a flowery chaplet crowned the locks of many a knight;
And with cheeks and lips unpainted saw ye many a lovely maid,
And, if Kiot the truth hath spoken, knight and lady they were arrayed
In diverse garb and fashion, with head-gear both high and low,
As each in their native country their faces were wont to show—
'Twas a folk from far kingdoms gathered and diverse their ways were found—
If to lady a knight were lacking she sat not at the Table Round,
But if she for knightly service had promised a guerdon fair,
She might ride with her knight, but the others, they must to their tents repair.
When Arthur the Mass had hearkened, then Gramoflanz did they see
With Gowerzein's Duke and Florant; to the king came the comrades three,
And each one a boon would crave here, for each of the three was fain
To be one of the good Round Table, nor this grace did they fail to gain.
And if lady or knight would ask me who was richest of all that band,
Who sat as guests in the circle, and were gathered from every land,
Then here will I speak the answer, 'twas Feirefis Angevin,
But think not from my lips of his riches a further tale to win.
Thus in festive guise, and gaily, they rode to the circle wide,
And often to maid had it chanced (so closely the guests must ride)
Were her steed not well girthed she had fallen—with banners waving high
From every side of the meadow to each other the groups drew nigh;
And a Buhurd fair was ridden without the Table Round,
And in courtly guise and skilful no man rode *within* its bound;
There was space without for the chargers, and they handled their steeds with skill,
And rode each one against the other till the ladies had looked their fill.
Then in order fair they seat them when 'twas time for the guests to eat,
And cup-bearer, steward, and butler, they bethink them as shall be meet,
How, courteous, to do their office—No lack of food had they,
And many a maid was honoured as she sat by her knight that day.
And many thro' fond heart's counsel had been served by knightly deed—
And Feirefis, and the Waleis, to the maidens they gave good heed,
And they looked on the one and the other, and a fair choice was theirs, I ween,
For never on field or meadow may the eye of man have seen
So many sweet lips and fair faces as shone there at the Table Round,
And the heathen was glad for their beauty, and the joy that his heart had found.
Now hail to the hour that cometh, and the tidings they soon shall hear

From the welcome lips of a maiden who draweth the host anear;
For a maiden came towards them, and her raiment was fair to see,
And e'en as in France the custom so 'twas fashioned right cunningly.
Her mantle was costly velvet, and blacker, I ween, its hue
Than the coat of a sable jennet; and with gold was it woven thro'
With turtle-doves, all shining, the badge of the Grail were they.
And they looked and they marvelled at her as toward them she made her way,
For swiftly she came, and her head-gear was high and white, her face
With many a veil was shrouded, and her features no man might trace.
Then with even pace and seemly she rode o'er the turf so green,
And saddle and reins and trappings were costly enow I ween;
And they let her within the circle—Now she who would tidings bring
No fool was she, but wise maiden—So rode she around the ring,
And they showed her where sat King Arthur, nor her greeting should fail that day,
In French was her speech, and in this wise the monarch she fain would pray;
They should wreak not on her their vengeance for the words that she spake of yore,
But hearken unto her message since welcome the news she bore.
And the king and the queen she pleaded to give unto her their aid,
That she failed not to win from the hero the grace that she fain had prayed.
Then to Parzival she turned her, since his place by the king's was found,
And she stayed not, but down from her charger she sprang swiftly unto the ground,
And with courteous mien, as beseemed her, fell low at the hero's feet,
And, weeping, she prayed that in friendship her coming he now would greet,
And forget his wrath against her, and forgive her without a kiss.
And they joined to her prayer their pleadings, King Arthur and Feirefis.
Of a sooth Parzival must hate her, yet he hearkened to friendship's prayer,
And of true heart and free forgave her—Tho' I say not the maid was fair,
Yet methinks she was honour-worthy—Then swiftly she sprang upright,
And thanked those who had won her pardon for the wrong she had done the knight.
Then she raised her hand to her head-gear, were it wimple or veil, no less
Was it cast on the ground, and all men knew Kondrie, the sorceress.
And they knew of the Grail the token and the badge that the maiden bare,
And all men I ween must marvel—Her face it was e'en as fair
As man and maiden saw it when to Plimizöl's banks she came,
Of her countenance have I told ye, and to-day was it still the same,
And yellow her eyes as the topaz, long her teeth, and her lips in hue
Were even as is a violet, that man seeth not *red* but *blue*!
Yet methinks had her will been evil she had borne not the head-gear rare
That aforetime, on Plimizöl's meadow, it had pleased the maid to wear.
The sun it had worked no evil, if its rays thro' her hair might win
Yet scarce had they shone so fiercely as to darken one whit her skin.
Then courteous she stood, and she spake thus, and good were her words to hear,
In the self-same hour her tidings came thus to the listening ear;
'Oh! well is thee, thou hero, thou Gamuret's son so fair,
Since God showeth favour to thee whom Herzeleide of old did bear.
And welcome is he, thy brother, Feirefis, the strange of hue,
For the sake of my Queen Sekundillé, and the tidings that erst I knew
Of the gallant deeds of knighthood that his valiant hand hath done,
For e'en from the days of his childhood great fame for himself he won!'
And to Parzival she spake thus, 'Now rejoice with a humble heart,
Since the crown of all earthly blessings henceforward shall be thy part,
For read is the mystic writing—The Grail, It doth hail thee king,
And Kondwiramur, thy true wife, thou shalt to thy kingdom bring,
For the Grail, It hath called her thither—Yea, and Lohengrin, thy son,
For e'en as thou left her kingdom twin babes thou by her hadst won.

And Kardeiss, he shall have in that kingdom a heritage rich I trow!
 And were no other bliss thy portion than that which I tell thee now—
 That with true lips and pure, thou shalt greet him, Anfortas the king, again,
 And thy mouth thro' the mystic question shall rid him of all his pain,
 For sorrow hath been his portion—If joy's light thro' thy deed shall shine
 On his life, then of all earth's children whose bliss shall be like to thine?'
 Seven stars did she name unto him in Arabic, and their might,
 Right well Feirefis should know it, who sat there, both black and white.
 And she spake, 'Sir Parzival, mark well the names that I tell to thee,
 There is Zevâl the highest planet, and the swift star Almustri;
 Almaret and the shining Samsi, great bliss unto thee they bring,
 Alligafir is fifth, and Alketer stands sixth in the starry ring;
 And the nearest to us is Alkamer; and no dream shall it be, my rede,
 For the bridle of heaven are they, to guide and to check its speed,
 'Gainst its swiftness their power, it warreth—Now thy sorrow is passed away,
 For far as shall be their journey, and far as shall shine their ray.
 So wide is the goal of thy riches and the glory thine hand shall win,
 And thy sorrow shall wane and vanish—Yet this thing It holds for sin,
 The Grail and Its power, It forbids thee unlawful desire to know,
 And the company of sinners henceforth must thou shun, I trow;
 And riches are thine, and honour, but from these shall thy life be free—
 Now thy youth was by sorrow cherished, and her lesson she taught to thee,
 But by joy she afar is driven, for thou hast thy soul's rest won,
 And in grief thou o'er-long hast waited for the joy that is now begun.'
 Nor seemed ill to the knight her tidings—Thro' joy must his eyelids know
 A rain of crystal tear-drops from a true heart's overflow.
 And he quoth, 'If thou speakest, Lady, the thing that indeed shall be,
 If God as his knight doth claim me, and they are elect with me,
 My wife and my child, then I wot well, tho' a sinful man am I,
 God looketh with favour on me, and hath dealt with me wondrously!
 Of a sooth hast thou here repaid me for the grief thou on me hast brought,
 Yet I deem well thy wrath had spared me save that evil myself had wrought,
 Nor to bliss was I then predestined—but thou bringest such tidings fair
 That my sorrow hath found an ending—And these arms do thy truth declare,
 For when by the sad Anfortas I sat in Monsalväscher hall,
 Full many a shield I looked on that hung fair on the castle wall,
 And with turtle-doves all were blazoned, such as shine on thy robe to-day.
 But say, to the joy that awaits me, when and how may I take my way,
 For I would not there were delaying?' Then she quoth, 'Lord and master dear,
 But *one* knight alone shall ride with thee; choose thou from these warriors here
 And trust thou to my skill and knowledge to guide thee upon thy way,
 For thy succour Anfortas waiteth, wouldst thou help him, make no delay!'
 Then they heard, all they who sat there, how Kondrie had come again
 And the tidings she bare; and teardrops fell soft like a summer's rain
 From the bright eyes of Orgeluse, since Parzival should speak
 The words that should heal Anfortas, nor that healing be long to seek.
 Then Arthur, the fame-desirous, spake to Kondrie in courtesy,
 'Now, Lady, wilt ride to thy lodging? Say, how may we care for thee?'
 And she quoth, 'Is she here, Arnivé, what lodging she shall prepare,
 That lodging shall well content me till hence with my lord I fare;
 If a captive she be no longer, then fain would I see them all,
 The queen, and the other ladies, whom Klingsor, in magic thrall,
 For many a year hath fettered'—Then they lifted her on her steed,
 Two knights, and unto Arnivé did the faithful maiden speed.
 Now the feast drew nigh to its ending—By his brother sat Parzival,

And he prayed him to be his comrade, nor his words did unheeded fall,
 For Feirefis spake him ready to Monsalväscher Burg to ride—
 In the self-same hour upstood they, the guests, o'er the ring so wide,
 And Feirefis prayed this favour from Gramoflanz, the king,
 If in sooth he should love his cousin of that love he would token bring;
 'Both thou and Gawain, ye must help me, whether princes or kings they be,
 Or barons, or knights, none betake them from this field till my gifts they see.
 Myself had I shamed if I rode hence and never a gift should leave,
 And the minstrel-folk they shall wait here till they gifts from my hand receive.
 And Arthur, this thing would I pray thee, seek that none of these knights disdain,
 Tho' lofty their birth, a token of friendship from me to gain;
 For the shame, on thyself shalt thou take it—one so rich shall they ne'er have known—
 Give me messengers unto the haven that the presents to all be shown!
 Then they sware them unto the heathen that no man of them should depart
 From the field till four days were ended, and the heathen was glad at heart,
 And wise messengers Arthur gave him, who should forth to the haven fare—
 Feirefis took him ink and parchment, and a letter he bade them bear,
 Nor the writing, I ween, lacked tokens of his hand from whom it came,
 And seldom methinks a letter such goodly return might claim!
 Then soon must the messengers ride hence—Parzival stood the host before,
 And in French did he tell the story from Trevezent learnt of yore,
 How the Grail, throughout all ages, may never by man be known,
 Save by him whom God calleth to It, whose name God doth know alone.
 And the tale shall be told in all lands; no conflict may win that prize,
 And 'tis vain on that Quest to spend them, since 'tis hidden from mortal eyes!
 And for Parzival and his brother the maidens must mourn that day,
 Farewell they were loth to bid them—Ere the heroes rode on their way
 Thro' the armies four they gat them, and they prayed leave from each and all,
 And joyful, they took their journey, well armed 'gainst what might befall.
 And the third day hence to Ioflanz from the heathen's host they brought
 Great gifts, so rich and costly, men ne'er on such wealth had thought.
 Did a king take of them, his kingdom was rich for evermore—
 And to each as beseemed his station the precious gifts they bore,
 And the ladies, they had rich presents, from Triant and Nouriente—
 How the others rode I know not, but the twain, they with Kondrie went!

BOOK XVI LOHENGRIN

Now Anfortas and his Templars they suffered sore grief and pain,
 And their true love in bondage held him, since he prayed them for death in vain;
 And in sooth death had been his portion, save they wrought that the Grail he saw—
 From the might of Its mystic virtue fresh life must he ever draw.
 Then he spake to the knights of Monsalväscher, 'Of a sooth, were ye true of heart,
 Ye had pitied ere this my sorrow, how long shall pain be my part?
 If reward ye would have as deserving, then God give ye payment fair,
 For ever was I your servant since the days that I harness bare.
 Atonement in full have I made here for aught I have done of wrong
 To ye, e'en tho' none had known it, and my penance endureth long!
 If ye would not be held unfaithful, by the helmet and shield I bore,
 And the bond of our common knighthood, release me from bondage sore!
 For this of a truth must ye grant me, if ye do not the truth disdain,
 I bare *both* as a knight undaunted, and fame thro' my deeds did gain.
 For hill and vale have I ridden, and many a joust have run,
 And with sword-play good from my foemen much hatred methinks, I won.
 Yet with ye doth that count for little! Bereft of all joy am I;
 Yet, cometh the Day of Judgment, my voice would I lift on high,

And in God's sight, I, one man only, at the last will accuse ye all,
 If freedom ye fail to give me, and to Hell shall ye surely fall!
 For in sooth ye should mourn my sorrow—From the first have ye seen the thing,
 And ye know how it came upon me—Now I profit ye not as king,
 And all too soon will ye think so, when thro' me ye have lost your soul—
 Alas! why thus ill-entreat me? Ere this had I been made whole!'

And the knights from his grief had freed him, save they hope from the word must draw
 That Trevezent spake of aforetime, and that writ on the Grail he saw.
 And once more would they wait his coming whose joy there had waxen weak,
 And the hour that should bring them healing from the question his lips should speak.
 Then the king of a wile bethought him, and fast would he close his eyes,
 And four days long so he held them, when the knights, in their 'customedwise,
 Before the Grail would bear him, if he said them or yea, or nay;
 But his weakness so wrought upon him, as before the shrine he lay,
 That his eyelids he needs must open, and against his will must live,
 For the Grail held death far from him and fresh life must Its vision give.
 And so was it with Anfortas till the day when Parzival
 And Feirefis his brother, rode swift to Monsalväsich' hall;
 And the time was near when the planet, its course in high heaven run,
 Mars or Jupiter, glowing wrathful, its station had well-nigh won,
 And the spot whence it took its journey—Ah! then was an evil day
 That wrought ill to the wound of Anfortas, and the torment would have its way;
 And maiden and knight must hearken as the palace rang with his cries,
 And the help that no man might give him he besought with despairing eyes,
 For past all aid was he wounded, and his knights could but share his grief—
 Yet the tale saith he drew ever nearer who should bring him alone relief.
 Then oft as the bitter anguish in its bondage the hero held,
 The taint of the wound to banish, the hall was with sweetness filled,
 For before him they spread on the carpet Terebinth, and odours fair
 Of aromatic spices and sweet woods filled the scented air.
 Teriak and precious Ambra, and methinks that their smell was sweet—
 Cardamom, Jeroffel, Muscat, lay broken beneath the feet
 Where'er one set foot on the carpet; and e'en as each footstep fell
 Their perfume arose, and their freshness, of the venom o'ercame the smell.
 And his fire was of Lignum aloe, as methinks ye have heard afore—
 Of the horny skin of the viper had they fashioned the pillars four
 That stood 'neath his couch—'Gainst the venom must his knights on the cushions strew
 Powder of roots so precious, whose healing scent they knew.
 Well stuffed, but unsewed, was the covering against which the monarch leant,
 And the silk and the mattress 'neath it were of Palmât of Nouriente.
 And the couch itself was yet richer, with many a precious stone
 Was it decked, nor were others found there save the rarest of jewels alone;
 And by Salamanders woven were the cords which the bed did bind,
 Yea even the fastening 'neath it—Yet no joy might Anfortas find.
 The couch on all sides was costly, (no man shall contend I ween
 That he in the days of his lifetime a richer shall e'er have seen.)
 'Twas precious alone from the virtue of the jewels and their magic power,
 Would ye learn their names, then hearken, for we know them unto this hour.
 Carbuncle and Balas ruby, Silenite, and Chalcedony,
 Gagatromeus, Onyx, Coral, and Bestion, fair to see.
 And there too were Pearl and Opal, Ceraunius and Epistites,
 Jerachites, Heliotropia, Panterus, Agate, and Emathites.
 Antrodragma, Praseme, and Saddae, Dionisia and Celidon,
 Sardonyx and red Cornelian, Jasper and Calcofon.
 Echites, Iris, Gagates, and Lyncurium, with many more,

Asbestos and Cecolithus, and Jacinth, that rich couch bore.
Galactida, Orites, Enydrus, and Emerald, glowing green,
Absist and Alabanda, and Chrysolect had ye seen.
Hiennia, Sapphire, Pyrites, and beside them, here and there,
Turquoise, and Lipparèa, Chrysolite, and Ruby fair—
Paleisen, Sardius, Diamond, Chrysoprasis, and Malachite,
Diadoch, Peanite, and Medus with Beryl and Topaze bright.
And many they taught high courage, and others such virtue knew
That healing skill they taught men, and fresh life from their power they drew.
And many their strength won from them, if aright they might use their art,
And therewith would they tend Anfortas whom they loved with a faithful heart—
And great grief had he brought his people, yet joy soon his lot shall be—
To Terre de Salväsch from Ioflanz he rideth to speak him free,
Parzival, with the maid and his brother, nor in truth did I ever hear
The distance these three had journeyed ere they drew to the Burg anear;
But conflict had been their portion had Kondrie not been their guide,
But afar from all strife did she hold them, and in peace on their way they ride.
So came they at length to an outpost—Then swiftly towards them sped
Many Templars well armed and mounted, and right soon they the truth had read,
And they knew by the guide that succour at last to their walls should draw,
And the Captain he spake out gladly as the Turtle-doves he saw
Gleam fair on Kondrie's vesture, 'Now an end hath it found, our grief,
With the sign of the Grail he cometh who shall bring to our king relief,
The knight we have looked and have longed for since the dawn of our sorrow's day—
Stand ye still, for great gladness cometh, and our mourning is past away!'
Feirefis Angevin would urge him, his brother, to joust to ride,
But Kondrie, she grasped his bridle, lest conflict should there betide,
And the maiden, true but unlovely, spake thus unto Parzival,
'Shield and banner, thou sure shouldst know them, of the Grail are these heroes all,
And ready to do thee service.' Then out spake the heathen bold,
'If so it shall be, from battle mine hand may I well withhold.'
Then Parzival prayed that Kondrie would ride forward, the knights to meet,
And she rode, and she spake of the gladness that neared them with flying feet.
And, one and all, the Templars sprang straightway unto the ground,
And from off their head the helmet in the self-same hour unbound,
And Parzival they greeted, and they were in his greeting blest,
And Feirefis they welcomed as befitted a noble guest.
And then with the twain to Monsalväsch the Templars they took their way;
Though they wept, yet methinks that gladness was the fount of their tears that day.
And a countless folk they found there, many grey-haired knights and old,
And pages of noble bearing, and of servants, a host untold.
And sad were the folk and mournful, whom their coming might well rejoice,
And Parzival and his brother they welcomed with friendly voice,
And kindly did they receive them, without, in the palace court,
At the foot of the noble stairway, and the knights to the hall they brought.
And, e'en as was there the custom, a hundred carpets round,
Each one with a couch upon it, were spread there upon the ground;
And each couch bare a velvet covering, and methinks, if the twain had wit,
The while that the squires disarmed them 'twould pleasure them there to sit.
And a chamberlain came towards them, and he brought to them vesture fair,
And each should be clad as the other, and many a knight sat there.
And they bare many precious vessels of gold, (none I ween was glass,)
And the twain they drank, and upstood them to get them to Anfortas.
And this have ye heard of aforetime, how he lay, for he scarce might sit,
And the couch and its goodly decking, forsooth have ye read of it.

And the twain did Anfortas welcome with gladness, and yet with grief,
 And he spake, 'O'er-long have I waited tho' I win from thine hand relief;
 But a while ago didst thou leave me in such wise, art thou true of heart,
 And thinkest to aid my sorrow, thou must have in repentance part.
 If e'er men have praised thy valour, then be thou to my woe a friend,
 And pray of these knights and maidens that death may my torment end;
 If *Parzival* men shall call thee, then forbid me the Grail to see
 Seven nights and eight days, and I wot well my wailing shall silenced be!
 Nor further I dare to warn thee—Well for thee if thou help canst bring!
 A stranger shall be thy comrade, and I think it an evil thing
 That thus he doth stand before me, say wherefore no thought dost take
 For his comfort, and bid him seat him?' Then *Parzival*, weeping, spake:
 'Now say where the Grail It lieth? If God's mercy He think to show,
 And it be o'er His wrath the victor, this folk, they shall surely know!'
 Then three times on his knee he bowed him in the Name of the Trinity,
 And three times he prayed that the sorrow of Anfortas should ended be,
 Then he stood upright, and he turned him to the monarch, and thus he spake:
 '*What aileth thee here, mine uncle?*' He who Lazarus from death did wake,
 And by the mouth of His saint, *Sylvester*, a dead beast to life did bring,
 Wrought healing and strength on Anfortas—and all men beheld the king,
 And what French folk shall know as '*Florie*' it shone on his face so fair,
 And *Parzival*'s manly beauty was but as the empty air!
 Yea, *Vergulacht*, *Askalon*'s monarch, and *Absalom*, *David*'s son,
 And all who the dower of beauty as their birthright shall e'er have won—
 E'en *Gamuret*, as men saw him draw near unto *Kanvoleis*,
 So wondrous fair to look on—they were naught unto all men's eyes
 When matched with the radiant beauty that forth from his bitter woe
 He bare, the King Anfortas—such skill God doth surely know!
 No choice was there for the *Templars* since the writing upon the Grail
 Had named unto them their ruler, and *Parzival* did they hail
 Their king and their lord henceforward; and I ween ye in vain would seek
 Would ye find two men as wealthy, if of riches I here may speak,
 As *Parzival* and his brother, *Feirefis Angevin*—
 And many a proffered service the host and his guest did win.
 I know not how many stages queen *Kondwiramur* had made
 On her journey towards *Monsalväs*, nor, joyful, her steps delayed,
 For already the truth had been told her, and a messenger tidings bare,
 And she knew that her grief was ended and her gladness had blossomed fair.
 And led by her uncle, *Kiot*, and by many a hero bold,
 Had she come unto *Terre de Salväs* and the wood where they fought of old;
 Where in joust *Segramor* had fallen, and her lord did her likeness know
 In the threefold blood-drops mystic, on the white of the drifted snow.
 And there should *Parzival* seek her, and tho' toilsome and rough the way
 Yet never a gladder journey had he ridden than he rode that day!
 Then a *Templar* tidings brought him, 'E'en as doth her rank beseem
 Full many a knight so courteous rideth hither beside the queen.'
 Then *Parzival* bethought him, with the knights of the Holy Grail
 To *Trevrezent* did he ride first, and he told him the wondrous tale;
 From his heart was the hermit joyful that it thus with Anfortas stood,
 Nor death was his lot, but the question brought rest to the hero good.
 And he quoth, 'Yea, God's power is mighty—Who doth at His Council sit?
 Who hath known of His strength the limit? What Angel hath fathomed it?
 God is Man, and the Word of His Father; God is Father at once and Son,
 And I wot thro' His Spirit's working may succour and aid be won!'
 Then *Trevrezent* quoth to his nephew, 'Greater marvel I ne'er may see

Than that thou by thy wrath hast won blessing, and th' Eternal Trinity
Hath given thee thy desiring! Yet aforetime in sooth I lied,
For I thought from the Grail to bring thee, and the truth I from thee would hide.
Do thou for my sin give me pardon, henceforth I thy hand obey,
O my king, and son of my sister!—Methinks that I once did say
That the spirits cast forth from Heaven thereafter the Grail did tend
By God's will, and besought His favour, till their penance at last did end.
But God to Himself is faithful, and ne'er doth He changing know,
Nor to them whom I named as forgiven did He ever forgiveness show.
For they who refuse His service, He Himself will, I ween, refuse,
And I wot they are lost for ever, and that fate they themselves did choose.
And I mourned for thy fruitless labour, for ne'er did the story stand
That the Grail might by man be conquered, and I fain had withheld thine hand;
But with *thee* hath the chance been other, and thy prize shall the highest be,
But since God's Hand doth give It to thee, turn thine heart to humility.'
Quoth Parzival to his uncle, 'I would see her I ne'er might see
For well-nigh five years—When together we dwelt she was dear to me,
And no whit less dear shall she now be! Yet thy counsel I fain would hear
So long as death fail to part us, thou didst help me in need so drear!
Now I ride to my wife, since she cometh to meet me upon my way,
By Plimizöl's banks doth she wait me, and leave I from thee would pray.'
And the good man bade 'God speed him,' and he rode thro' the dusky night,
And his men knew the woodland pathways—In the early morning light
He found that which brought him gladness; full many a tent stood fair,
From out the kingdom of Brobarz many banners were planted there,
With many a shield beneath them—there lay princes from out his land,
And Parzival fain would ask them where the tent of the queen might stand?
If her camp lay apart from the others? Then they showed him where she should be,
And a goodly ring around her of tents did the hero see.
And Duke Kiot of Katelangen, he had risen ere dawn of day,
And he looked on the band of riders who came by the woodland way.
And tho' grey was the light of the morning, yet, as the host nearer drew,
Kiot saw the Dove on their armour, and the arms of the Grail he knew;
And the old man sighed as he thought him of Schoysiané, his lovely bride,
How he won her in bliss at Monsalväsch, and how she untimely died.
Towards Parzival he stepped him, and he bade him a greeting fair;
By a page he bade the queen's Marshal a lodging meet prepare
For the knights who had there drawn bridle—in sooth 'twas a gallant band—
Then to the queen's dressing-chamber he led Parzival by the hand,
(*'Twas a small tent made of buckram,*) and there, in the waxing light,
His harness they take from off him ere he pass to his lady's sight.
And the queen she knew naught of his coming—her twin sons beside her lay,
Lohengrin and Kardeiss; and their father, methinks he was glad that day!
There he found them slumbering sweetly, in a tent both high and wide,
And many a lovely lady lay sleeping on either side.
Then Kiot, he drew the covering from the queen, and he bade her wake,
And look, and laugh, and be joyful, and her love to her arms to take;
And she looked up and saw her husband; and naught but her smock she bare,
The covering she wrapt around her, and sprang swift on the carpet fair,
Kondwiramur, the lovely lady—and Parzival held her tight,
And they say that they kissed each other, the queen and her faithful knight.
'Thou joy of my heart! Good Fortune hath sent thee again to me,'
She quoth, and she bade him welcome, 'Now in sooth I should wrathful be,
Yet have I no heart for anger! Ah! blest be the dawn and the day
That this dear embrace hath brought me, which all sorrow must drive away.

For now at last have I found thee, whom my heart hath desired so long,
 And grief in my heart is vanquished, and sighing is turned to song.
 And now from their sleep they wakened, both Lohengrin and Kardeiss,
 Naked they lay on their pillows, and fair in their father's eyes,
 And, joyful, Parzival kissed them whom he never had seen before—
 Then at Kiot's courteous bidding the babes from the tent they bore,
 And Kiot, he bade the maidens to get them from out the tent,
 And they greeted their lord, long absent, ere yet on their way they went.
 Then he bade the queen care for her husband, and the maidens from thence he led,
 And the curtains they drew together, for as yet was the night scarce sped.
 Now if blood and snow had robbed him of his senses and wit of yore,
 (In this self-same spot its message the snow to his true heart bore.)
 For such sorrow she well repaid him, Kondwiramur, his wife—
 Nor elsewhere had he sought love's solace in payment for love's fierce strife,
 Tho' many their love had proffered—I ween that in bliss he lay,
 And converse sweet, till morning drew nigh to the middle day.
 And the army, they rode together, on the Templars had they gazed,
 And their shields in jousts were piercèd, and with many a sword-blow grazed;
 And each knight he wore a surcoat of silk or of velvet rare,
 And their feet were shod with iron, nor harness beside they bare.
 Nor longer they cared to slumber—Then the queen alike and king
 Arose, and e'en as they bade him, a priest the Mass would sing;
 And closely they thronged together, that army, brave and good,
 Who in their queen's day of peril her shield 'gainst Klamidé stood.
 Then, the benediction given, his men greeted Parzival,
 Many gallant knights and worthy, their true words from true lips must fall.
 From the tent they take the hangings, and the king spake, 'Say which is he,
 Of my boys, who henceforward ruler of your folk and your land shall be?'
 And further he spake to the princes, 'Both Waleis and Norgal's land,
 And their towns, Kingrivals and Kanvoleis, by his birthright shall serve his hand,
 With Béalzenan and Anjou, should he grow unto man's estate;
 And thither shall ye fare with him, and shall there on his bidding wait.
 Gamuret was he called, my father, and he left them to me, his heir,
 But I, by God's grace, have won me an heritage yet more fair!
 Since the Grail shall be mine, I bid ye your fealty to swear anew
 To my child, ere this hour be ended, if your hearts shall to me be true!'

And of right goodwill they did this—Ye saw many proud banners wave,
 And two little hands the tenure of many a wide land gave.
 And there did they crown Kardeiss king; and, when many a year had flown,
 Kanvoleis, and Gamuret's kingdom they needs must his lordship own—
 And then by Plimizöl's water did they measure a circle wide
 That there a feast might be holden ere again on their way they ride.
 Nor long at the board they tarried; no longer the host might stay,
 The tents were struck, with their child-king they wended their homeward way.
 And many a maid and vassal must bid to their queen Farewell
 In such wise that they made loud mourning, and many a teardrop fell.
 And Lohengrin and his mother did the Templars take in their care,
 And with them to the Burg of Monsalväsche again on their journey fare.
 Quoth Parzival, 'Once in this woodland an hermitage did I see,
 And thro' it a rippling brooklet flowed swift on its way so free;
 If ye know where it stands ye shall show me.' His comrades swift answer gave,
 They knew one; 'There dwells a maiden, and she weeps o'er her true love's grave;
 A shrine of all goodness is she—Our road it doth lead that way,
 And her heart is ne'er free from sorrow.' 'That maid will we see to-day,'

Quoth Parzival, and the others, as he willed, so they thought it good,
 And onward they spurred their chargers, and rode thro' the lonely wood.
 And they found, in the dusk of the evening, on her knees Siguné dead,
 And the queen wept for bitter sorrow—Then they brake thro' unto the maid;
 Parzival, for the sake of his cousin, bade them raise of the tomb the stone,
 There, embalmed lay Schionatulander, nor long should he lie alone,
 For beside him they laid the maiden, who in life to him true love gave
 In such wise as beseemed a maiden, and they closed o'er the twain the grave.
 And she wept for her uncle's daughter, the queen, with a faithful heart;
 Schoysiané, the dead maid's mother, had shown her a mother's part,
 And had cared for her in her childhood, and therefore she sorrow knew:
 And Parzival's aunt, too, was she, if the tale Kiot read be true.
 Kiot knew not the death of his daughter, he was guardian to King Kardeiss—
 (Nor my tale like the bow shall be bended, but straight as an arrow flies.)
 They delayed not upon their journey, to Monsalväsch they came by night,
 And the hours Feirefis must wait them sped swift in their joyful flight.
 And they lighted many a taper, 'twas as flamed all the woodland wide,
 And a Templar of Patrigalt, armèd, by the queen's bridle rein did ride;
 And broad and wide was the courtyard, and many a host stood there,
 And they welcomed the queen, and a greeting to their lord and his son they bare;
 And they bore Lohengrin to his uncle, Feirefis, who was black and white,
 And the babe turned aside nor would kiss him—as children oft do from fright!
 But gaily he laughed, the heathen—Then they gat them from out the court,
 When first the queen had dismounted, who joy with her coming brought—
 And they led the guests so noble, where, with many a lady fair,
 Both Feirefis and Anfortas awaited them on the stair.
 Répanse de Schoie, and from Greenland, Garschiloie, the fair of face,
 Florie of Lünel, the bright-eyed, rich were they in maiden grace.
 There she stood, than a reed more graceful, to whom beauty nor truth should fail,
 The daughter of Reil's lord, Jernis, as Anflisé the maid they hail;
 And of Tenabroc, maid Clarischanz, sweet was she, and bright to see,
 And so slender her shape, I think me, an ant's scarce might slighter be.
 Feirefis stepped toward his hostess, and he kissed her e'en as she bade,
 And a kiss did she give Anfortas, for she joyed that his woe was stayed.
 Feirefis by the hand must lead her where her husband's aunt she found,
 Répanse de Schoie, and she kissed her, and the maidens who stood around,
 And her lips that were red aforetime thro' kissing grew yet more red,
 (And sorely I ween doth it grieve me, that this labour, I, in her stead,
 Might not here have taken on me, for weary in sooth was she;)
 Then her maids by the hand they take her, and they lead her in courteously.
 And the knights, in the hall they waited, that with countless tapers bright
 Was decked, on the walls they sparkled, and burnt with a steady light,
 For a solemn feast they made ready, when the Grail should be shown to all;
 For it was not on every feast-day, that they bare It thro' the hall,
 But on high festivals only—When nearer their aid should draw,
 On that even when joy forsook them, and the bleeding spear they saw,
 'Twas then, that the Grail might help them, that It thus thro' the hall was borne—
 Yet Parzival asked no question, and left them of joy forlorn—
 But now, in joy and gladness, might they look on the Grail again,
 For at last was their mourning ended, and their sorrow was pierced and slain!
 When the queen her riding garment had put off, and decked her hair,
 She came in such garb as beseemed her, in the light of the tapers fair;
 And Feirefis stepped to meet her, and he took her by the hand,
 And no man gainsaid his fellow, that in this, or in other land,
 None might speak of a fairer woman! And rich was the garb she wore,

A silk by a skilled hand woven, such as Sarant had wrought of yore,
 And with cunning and skill had fashioned in Thasmé, the paynim town—
 Feirefis Angevin, he led her thro' the palace hall adown,
 And the three great fires they burnt there with Lignum aloe sweet;
 And more there were by forty, both carpets alike and seats,
 Than the time when Parzival sat there and looked on the wondrous Grail,
 But one seat above all was costly, nor the host to his place should fail.
 And Feirefis, and Anfortas, they should sit there beside the king—
 And, courteous, they did them service, who the Grail to the hall should bring.
 Aforetime methinks ye heard it, how they to Anfortas bare
 The Grail, even so would they do now 'fore the child of King Tampentäre,
 And Gamuret's son—The maidens, no longer they make delay,
 Five-and-twenty in rightful order they wend thro' the hall their way.
 And Feirefis gazed on the first maid, with her sweet face and waving hair,
 And she pleased him well, yet the others who followed were yet more fair;
 And costly and rich their garments, and lovely each maiden's face,
 But Répanse de Schoie, who followed, was first in her maiden grace,
 And the Grail, so men have told me, might be borne by her hands alone;
 Pure was her heart, and radiant as sunlight her fair face shone.
 Did I tell ye of all the service—how many did water pour,
 And the tables they bare, (I wot well far more than they had of yore,)
 How discord fled from the palace; how the cars on their circuit rolled,
 With their freight of golden vessels, 'twere long ere the tale were told.
 For the sake of speed would I hasten—with reverence from the Grail
 Each took of the fowl of the forest, wild or tame, nor their drink should fail;
 Each took wine or mead as it pleased him, Claret, Morass, or Sinopel;
 At Pelrapär 'twas far other, as Gamuret's son might tell!
 Then the heathen would know the wonder—What hands did these gold cups fill
 That stood empty here before him? The wonder, it pleased him still!
 Then answered the fair Anfortas, who sat by the heathen's side,
 'Seest thou not the Grail before thee?' But Feirefis replied,
 'Naught I see but a green Achmardi, that my Lady but now did bear,
 I mean her who stands before us with the crown on her flowing hair,
 And her look to mine heart hath piercèd—I deemed I so strong should be
 That never a wife nor a maiden my gladness should take from me;
 But now doth it sore displease me, the love I may call mine own—
 Discourteous indeed I think me to make unto thee my moan
 When I never have done thee service! What profits my wealth, I trow,
 Or the deeds I have done for fair women, or the gifts that I gave but now,
 Since here I must live in anguish! Nay, Jupiter, thou wast fain
 I should ride here, didst hither send me to torment of grief and pain?'
 And the strength of his love, and his sorrow, turned him pale where he erst was light—
 Kondwiramur, she had found a rival in this maiden's beauty bright—
 In her love-meshes did she hold him, Feirefis, the noble guest,
 And the love that he erst had cherished he cast it from out his breast.
 What recked he of Sekundillé, her love, and her land so fair,
 Since she wrought on him woe so bitter, this maiden beyond compare?
 Klauditté, and Sekundillé, Olympia, and many more,
 Who in distant lands had repaid him with love for his deeds of yore,
 What cared he now for their kindness? It seemed but a worthless thing
 To Gamuret's son, the heathen, great Zassamank's noble king!
 Then he saw, the fair Anfortas, his comrade in pain so sore,
 (For the spots in his skin waxed pallid, and heavy the heart he bore,)
 And he spake, 'Sir Knight, it doth grieve me if thou dost for my sister mourn,
 No man for her sake hath sorrowed since the day that the maid was born.

No knight for her joust hath ridden; to none doth she favour show;
 But with me did she dwell at Monsalväsch, and hath shared in my bitter woe,
 And it somewhat hath dimmed her beauty, since she seldom hath joyful been—
 Thy brother is son to her sister, he may help thee in this I ween.
 'If that maiden shall be thy sister,' quoth Feirefis Angevin,
 'Who the crown on her loose locks weareth, then help me her love to win.
 'Tis she that my heart desireth—What honour mine hand hath won
 With shield and spear in Tourney, for her sake hath it all been done,
 And I would she might now reward me! The Tourney hath fashions five,
 And well known unto me is each one, nor against knightly rule I strive.
 Spear in rest 'gainst the foe have I ridden; I have smitten him from the side;
 His onslaught have I avoided; nor to fair joust have failed to ride
 In gallop, as should beseem me; I have followed the flying foe—
 Since the shield, it hath been my safeguard, such sorrow I ne'er may know
 As that which to-day besets me—I have fought with a fiery knight
 At Agremontein, I bare then a shield of Asbestos bright,
 And a surcoat of Salamander, else sure had I there been burned;
 And in sooth my life have I perilled, and my fame have I dearly earned.
 Ah! would but thy sister send me to battle for love's reward,
 In strife would I do her bidding, and her fame and mine own would guard.
 And ever my heart fierce hatred to my god Jupiter shall bear,
 If he make not an end of my sorrow, and give me this maiden fair!
 Of the twain, Frimutel was the father, and therefore Anfortas bore
 E'en such face and such form as his sister—Then the heathen, he looked once more
 On the maiden and then on her brother—What they bare him of drink or meat
 No morsel he ate, yet he sat there as one who made feint to eat.
 Then to Parzival spake Anfortas, 'Sir King, it doth seem to me
 That thy brother, who sitteth by me, he faileth the Grail to see!
 And Feirefis spake that he saw naught, nor knew what It was 'the Grail';
 And they hearkened his words, the Templars, and a marvel they deemed the tale.
 And Titurel needs must hear it, in his chamber the old king lay,
 And he quoth, 'If he be a heathen, then such thought shall he put away
 As that eyes unbaptized may win them the power to behold the Grail!
 Such barriers are built around It, his sight to the task shall fail.'
 Then they bare to the hall these tidings, and the host and Anfortas told
 How that which the folk did nourish, Feirefis, he might ne'er behold,
 Since from heathen eyes It was hidden, and they prayed him to seek the grace
 Of Baptism, by its virtue he should win him in Heaven a place.
 'If I, for your sake, be baptized, will that help me to win my love?'
 Spake Gamuret's son, the heathen—'As a wind shall all sorrows prove,
 That wooing or war shall have brought me, to the grief that I now must feel!
 If long or short the time be since I first felt the touch of steel,
 And fought 'neath a shield, such anguish ne'er hath fallen unto my share,
 And tho' love should, I ween, be hidden, yet my heart would its grief declare!
 'Of whom dost thou speak?' quoth the Waleis, 'Of none but that lady bright,
 Who is sister to this, thy comrade—If thou, as a faithful knight,
 Wilt help me to win the maiden, I will give her with kingly hand
 Great riches, and men shall hail her as queen over many a land!
 'If to Baptism thou wilt yield thee,' spake the host, 'then her love is thine,
 (And as *thou* I right well may hail thee, since the Grail and Its realm are mine,
 And our riches methinks are equal)'—Quoth Feirefis Angevin,
 'Then help me to bliss, my brother, that the love of thine aunt I win.
 And, if Baptism be won by battle, then help me to strife I pray,
 That I, for sweet love's rewarding, may do service without delay.

And mine ear well doth love the music when the spear-shafts in splinters break,
 And the helmet rings clear 'neath the sword-thrust, and the war-cry the echo wakes.'
 Then Parzival laughed out gaily, and Anfortas, he laughed yet more,
 'Nay, nay,' quoth the host, 'such blessing is no guerdon for deeds of war.
 I will give unto thee the maiden, by true Baptism's grace and power,
 But the god and the love of a heathen shalt thou leave in the self-same hour;
 And to-morrow, at early dawning, will I give to thee counsel true,
 Whose fruit shall be seen in the crowning of thy life with a blessing new!'
 Now Anfortas, before his sickness, in many a distant land
 Had won him fair fame, for Love's sake, by the deeds of his knightly hand.
 And the thoughts of his heart were gentle, and generous he was and free,
 And his right hand had won full often the guerdon of victory;
 So they sat in the wondrous presence of the Grail, three heroes true,
 The best of their day, and the bravest that sword-blade in battle drew.
 An ye will, they enough had eaten—They, courteous, the tables bare
 From the hall, and as serving-maidens, low bent they, those maidens fair.
 And Feirefis Angevin saw them as forth from the hall they passed,
 And in sorrow and deeper anguish I ween was the hero cast.
 And she who his heart held captive, she bare from the hall the Grail,
 And leave did they crave of their monarch, nor his will to their will should fail.
 How the queen, herself, she passed hence; how men did their task begin;
 Of the bedding soft they brought him who for love's pain no rest might win;
 How one and all, the Templars, with kindness would put away
 His grief, 'twere too long to tell ye—speak we now of the dawning day.
 In the light of the early morning came his brother, Parzival,
 With the noble knight Anfortas, and in this wise the tale they tell;
 This knight who to love was captive, proud Zassamank's lord and king,
 They prayed, of true heart, to follow, and they would to the Temple bring,
 And before the Grail they led him—And there had they bidden stand
 The wisest men of the Templars—knights and servants, a goodly band,
 Were there ere the heathen entered: the Font was a ruby rare,
 And it stood on a rounded pillar that of Jasper was fashioned fair,
 And of old Titurel, he gave it, and the cost was great I ween—
 Then Parzival spake to his brother, 'This maid wouldst thou have for queen,
 Then the gods thou hast served henceforward thou shalt for her sake forswear,
 And ever thine arms, as a true knight, 'gainst the foes of the true God bear,
 And, faithful, still do His bidding'—'Yea, aught that may win my love,'
 Quoth the heathen, 'I'll do right gladly, and my deeds shall my truth approve.'
 Now the Font, toward the Grail had they turned it, filled with water, nor hot nor cold,
 And a priest by its side did wait them, and grey-haired he was, and old;
 He had plunged 'neath baptismal waters full many a paynim child,
 And he spake to the noble heathen, and gentle his speech and mild—
 'If thy soul thou wouldst wrest from the Devil, thou shalt serve Him who reigns on high,
 And Threefold is He, yet but One God for aye is the Trinity.
 God is Man, and the Word of His Father, God is Father at once and Son,
 And alike shall the twain be honoured, and the Spirit with them is One!
 In the Threefold Name shall it cleanse thee, this water, with Threefold might,
 And from shadow of heathen darkness shalt thou pass into Christian light.
 In water was He baptized, in Whose likeness was Adam made,
 And each tree from the water draweth its sap, and its leafy shade.
 By water all flesh is nourished, and all that on earth doth live,
 And the eyes of man are quickened, such virtue doth water give;
 And many a soul it cleanseth, till it shineth so pure and white
 That the angels themselves in heaven methinks shall be scarce so bright!'
 To the priest then he spake, the heathen, 'If it bringeth me ease for woe

I will swear whatsoe'er thou biddest—If reward in her love I know,
 Then gladly I'll do His bidding—Yea, brother, I here believe
 In the God of my love, and for her sake all other gods I'll leave,
 (For such sorrow as she hath brought me I never have known before.)
 And it profiteth naught Sekundillé the love that to me she bore,
 And the honour that she hath done me—All that shall have passed away—
 In the Name of the God of my father would I fain be baptized to-day!
 Then the priest laid his hands upon him, and the blessing baptismal gave,
 And he did on the chrisom vesture, and he won what his soul did crave,
 For e'en as he was baptizèd they made ready the maiden mild,
 And for christening gift they gave him King Frimutel's lovely child.
 From his eyes had the Grail been hidden ere baptismal waters bright
 Had passed o'er his head, but henceforward, 'twas unveiled to his wondering sight,
 And, e'en as the rite was over, on the Grail they this writing read;
 'The Templar whom God henceforward to a strange folk should send as head,
 Must forbid all word or question of his country, or name, or race,
 If they willed he aright should help them, and they would in his sight find grace.
 For the day that they ask the question that folk must he leave straightway'—
 Since the time that their king, Anfortas, so long in his anguish lay,
 And the question o'er-long awaited, all questions but please them ill,
 The knights of the Grail, and no man doth question them with their will.
 Then, baptized, Feirefis the Christian to Anfortas made urgent prayer,
 He should ride with him to his kingdom, and his riches with him should share;
 But, with courtesy, Anfortas to the knight and his prayer said 'Nay,
 Naught shall hinder the willing service that to God I would give alway;
 'Tis a goodly crown, the Grail crown, thro' pride was it lost to me,
 Henceforth do I choose as my portion a life of humility,
 And riches and love of women shall be strangers unto my heart—
 Thou ledest with thee a fair wife, henceforth shall it be her part
 With true love to reward thy service, as to women is fit and fair,
 But I for the love of mine Order henceforward mine arms will bear;
 For the Grail and Its service only I many a joust will ride,
 But I fight never more for women—thro' a woman did ill betide!
 Yet no hatred I bear to women, high courage and joy they give
 Unto men, tho' I won but sorrow while I did in their service live.'
 But yet, for the sake of his sister, Feirefis rested not to pray
 That Anfortas should journey with them, but ever he said them nay.
 Then he prayed Lohengrin should fare with him, but the mother, she willed it not;
 And King Parzival spake, 'In the service of the Grail hath he part and lot,
 And my son, he is pledged to the Order, and a faithful heart and true
 Must he bear in the holy service—God grant him the will thereto!'
 Then in joy and in fair diversion, till eleven days were o'er,
 Feirefis abode at Monsalväsche, on the twelfth would he ride once-more,
 He would lead his wife, this rich man, to his army that yet did wait
 His coming, and Parzival sorrowed for the brother he won so late,
 And mourned sore when he heard the tidings—Then counsel he took straightway,
 And a goodly force of the Templars did he send with them on their way,
 Thro' the woodland paths should they guide them—Anfortas, the gallant knight,
 Himself fain would be their escort—sore wept many maidens bright.
 And new pathways they needs must cut them to Karkobra's city fair—
 Then Anfortas, he sent a message to him who was Burg-grave there;
 And he bade him, if aye of aforesaid rich gifts from his hand he won
 To bethink him, that so this service of true heart by him be done;
 His brother-in-law with his lady, the king's sister, he now must guide
 Thro' the wood Loehprisein, where the haven afar lieth wild and wide—

For now 'twas the hour of parting, nor further the knights must fare,
 But Anfortas, he spake to Kondrie, and he bade her the message bear.
 Then from Feirefis, the rich man, the Templars leave did pray,
 And the courteous knight and noble rode hence on his homeward way.
 And the Burg-grave no whit delayed him, but he did e'en at Kondrie's word,
 And gave welcome fair and knightly to the folk and their noble lord.
 Nor might Feirefis grow weary of his stay, at the dawn of day,
 With many a knight as escort, they guided him on his way.
 But I know not how far he had ridden, nor the countries his eyes had seen
 Ere he came once more to Ioflanz, and its meadow, so fair and green.
 And some of the folk yet abode there—and Feirefis fain had known,
 In the self-same hour, the tidings of whither the host had flown;
 For each one had sought his country, and the road that full well he knew—
 King Arthur to Camelot journeyed with many a hero true—
 Then he of Tribalibot hastened, and his army he sought once more,
 For his ships lay yet in the haven, and they grieved for their lord full sore
 And his coming brought joy and courage to many a hero bold—
 The Burg-grave and his knights from Karkobra he rewarded with gifts and gold—
 And strange news did they tell unto Kondrie, for messengers sought the host,
 Sekundillé was dead; with the tidings they many a sea had crossed.
 Then first in her distant journey did Répanse de Schoie find joy,
 And in India's realm hereafter did she bear to the king a boy;
 And *Prester John* they called him, and he won to himself such fame
 That henceforward all kings of his country were known by no other name.
 And Feirefis sent a writing thro' the kingdoms whose crown he bore,
 And the Christian Faith was honoured as it never had been of yore.
 (And Tribalibot was that country which as *India* here we know.)
 Then Feirefis spake to Kondrie, and he bade her his brother show
 (Who reigneth in far Monsalväsch) what had chanced unto him, the king,
 And the death of Queen Sekundillé—and the tidings the maid did bring;
 And Anfortas was glad and joyful to think that his sister fair,
 Without or strife or conflict, the crown of those lands might bear.
 Now aright have ye heard the story of the children of Frimutel,
 Five they were, and three are living, and death unto two befell.
 And the one was Schoysiané, who was pure in the sight of God,
 And the other was Herzeleide, and falsehood her soul abhorred;
 And the sword and the life of knighthood, Trevrezent, he had laid them down
 For the love of God, and His service, and the hope of a deathless crown.
 And the gallant knight, Anfortas, pure heart and strong hand he bore,
 And well for the Grail he jousted, but for women he fought no more.
 And Lohengrin grew to manhood, and cowardice from him flew,
 And his heart yearned for deeds of knighthood, to the Grail he did service true.
 Would ye further hear the story? A maiden, in days of yore,
 Whose heart was free from falsehood, the crown of a fair land bore—
 Her heirdom was rich and noble, and lowly and pure her heart,
 And no taint of earthly longing had found in her soul a part.
 And wooers she had in plenty, of crownèd kings, I ween,
 And princes, whose race and kingdom fit mate for her own had been.
 Yet so humble she was, the maiden, she thought not of earthly love—
 And the counts of her realm waxed wrathful, since no pleading her soul could move,
 And their anger raged hot against her that she gave not her maiden hand
 To one who should be fit ruler o'er her folk, and her goodly land.
 In God was her trust, whatever men might in their anger speak,
 And guiltless, she bare the vengeance her folk on her head would wreak.
 But she called of her land the princes, and they journeyed from far and near,

From many a distant country, the will of their queen to hear.
And she sware she would have no husband, and no man as her lord would own
Save him whom God's Hand should send her, his love would she wait alone.
Of the land of Brabant was she princess—From Monsalväsche he came, the knight
Whom God at His will should send her, and his guide was a swan so white.
He set foot in her land at Antwerp, and she knew that her heart spake true,
And gallant was he to look on, and all men the hero knew
For a noble knight and manly, and his face, it was wondrous fair,
And his fame was in every kingdom where men did his deeds declare.
And a wise man he was, free-handed, with never a doubting heart,
And faithful and true, and falsehood it found in his life no part.
A fair welcome the princess gave him—now list ye unto his rede,
Rich and poor stood there around him, and they gave to his words good heed,
And he spake thus, 'My Lady Duchess, if thou wilt not mine hand refuse,
But wilt have me for lord and husband, for thy sake I a kingdom lose—
But hearken to what I pray thee, ask thou never who I may be,
And seek not to know my country, for so may I abide with thee.
In the day thou dost ask the question of my love shalt thou be bereft—
Take thou warning, lest God recall me to the land which erewhile I left.'
Then she pledged her faith as a woman that her love, it should ne'er wax less,
She would do e'en as he should bid her, and never his will transgress
So long as God wit should give her—Her love did he win that night,
And Lord of Brabant and its Duchess they hailed him with morning light.
And the marriage feast was costly, and many a knight the land
That of right should be his, as vassal, must take from his princely hand.
For he gave ever righteous judgment, and many a gallant deed
Of knighthood he did, and, valiant, he won of fair fame his meed.
Fair children were born unto them—The folk of Brabant yet know
Of the twain, how he came unto them, and wherefore he thence must go,
And how long he dwelt among them ere her question broke the spell,
And drove him forth, unwilling, for so shall the story tell.
The friendly swan, it sought him, and a little boat did bring,
And he sailed thence, and left as tokens his sword, and his horn, and ring.
So *Lohengrin* passed from among them, for in sooth this gallant knight
Was Parzival's son, and none other, if the tale ye would know aright.
By water-ways he sought it, the home of the Grail, again—
And what of the lovely duchess who longed for her lord in vain?
Why drove she hence her true love? since he bade her be warned of yore,
And forbade her to ask the question when he landed on Brabant's shore—
Here Herr Erec should speak, for, I think me, he knoweth the tale to tell
Of revenging for broken pledges, and the fate that such speech befell!
If Chrétien of Troyes, the master, hath done to this tale a wrong,
Then *Kiot* may well be wrathful, for he taught us aright the song,
To the end the Provençal told it—How Herzeleide's son the Grail
Did win, as was fore-ordained when Anfortas thereto did fail.
And thus, from Provence, the story to the German land was brought,
And aright was it told, and the story doth lack in its ending naught.
I, Wolfram of Eschenbach, think me that here-of will I speak no more—
Of Parzival's race, and his kindred, of that have I told afore;
To the goal of his bliss have I brought him—he whose life such an end shall gain,
That his soul doth not forfeit Heaven for sins that his flesh shall stain,
And yet, as true man and worthy, the world's favour and grace doth keep
Hath done well, nor hath lost his labour, nor his fame shall hereafter sleep!
And if good and gracious women shall think I be worthy praise,
Since I tell to its end my story, then joyful shall be my days.

And since for the love of a woman I have sung it, this song of old,
I would that, in sweet words gentle, my guerdon by her be told!